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BEDS OF PEARLS

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By

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From Feet to Fathoms and *Lord, I Believe*

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And that he rose again the third day
According to the scriptures."

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CHAPTER I

BEDS OF PEARLS

"*Christ!*"
"Christ *died!*"
"Christ died *for our sins!*"
"Christ died for our sins *according to the scriptures!*"
"And he was *buried!*"
"And he *rose again!*"
"And he rose again *the third day!*"
"And he rose again the third day *according to the scriptures!*"

No matter what one does with eloquence of tongue and with skill of pen and with range of thought to exhaust the meanings and the treasures of the words given above, found in First Corinthians the fifteenth chapter and the third and fourth verses of that chapter, he leaves as many pearls behind as he takes away.

Veritable beds of pearls these verses be.

Browning sings:

"All the breath and the bloom of the year in the bag of one bee;
All the wonder and wealth of the mine in the heart of one gem;
In the core of one pearl all the shade and the shine of the sea;
Breath and bloom, shade and shine—wonder, wealth, and—how far above them—

Truth that's brighter than gem,
Trust that's purer than pearl,—
Brightest truth, purest trust in the universe—all were for me
In the kiss of one girl!"

All that of the sweet realities of love and brightest truth and purest trust—in a kiss, the kiss of a maiden fair?

So saith the poet.

But how much more than that, and how far beyond all that, is the wealth of the spiritual riches of God's truth and the wonder of God's gospel found in these verses from the Bible—verses around which we shall gather the meditations of our hearts and upon which we shall now pitch our mental tents.

As with the microscope we see worlds in water drops, as with the spectograph we learn the constituent elements of remotest astral bodies, as with the telescope we view landscapes millions of miles away, so, in the words that compose the sentences given above, we discover worlds of redemptive revelation—continents of truth compressed into a corner of phraseology, firmaments of wisdom contracted to the compass of a tent.

Indeed, a fortune in a single diamond.

Verily, infinity flung into a phrase.

An ocean in a cup.

The zephyr's whisper and the thunder cloud's wrath in one voice.

A volume in a line.

An oratorio in one statement.

A storm in a sigh.

All organs in one diapason.

A midnight sky blending with a firmament of glorified noon.

These verses, so vast no foot can visit all their shrines, so high no human mind can climb the altitudes of their affirmations, breathe the language of eternity.

Oceans lift high tides within their shores.

A tangled wood wherein no man knows all the way, a pathos of inspired Scripture that baffles definition, these words contain splendors—Grand-Canyon splendors—of revelation beyond the power of human words adequately to describe.

These verses, the chief substance of all promise and prophecy, comprehend in themselves the salvation of the world.

Whenever and wherever in any language printed, they hold the hostilities of hell and the friendships of heaven beneath their tranquil language.

They unfold, these wondrous verses do, a drama that opens with a subtle tempter's foul incursion and closes with a resurrection.

Thus they form, without the sound of pounding hammer or rasping saw, one of the stateliest cathedrals of the infallible, the inerrant, the God-breathed Word—a palace of truth resting on a pinnacle of expression.

The assembled sweetness of all flowers in one blossom, the eloquence of all eloquence in one utterance, these verses stand among the real sublimities of Bible vocabulary.

Words no more hold their superlative wonders than teacups hold oceans.

The best the wisest of men can say about them is as man's mean paint upon God's fair lilies.

"Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain unto it" (Psalms 139:6). "It is as high as heaven; what can I do? Deeper than hell; what can I know?" (Job 11:8).

Truly, to speak with woeful inadequacy, these verses are a scriptural orchestra of many instruments—an orchestra whose softest tone is whisper, an orchestra whose full breath is thunder!

"Christ!"

"Christ died!"

"Christ died for our sins!"

"Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures!"

"He was buried!"

"He rose again!"

"He rose again the third day!"

"He rose again the third day according to the scriptures!"

When one would speak, or write, of the truths contained in those words, a sense of inadequacy falls oppressively upon the human heart. And one feels his mind to be like some tiny creature at the bottom of the sea.

But, though we can hope to touch, at best, only the hem of the garment in speaking of the glories of these marvelous words, we would have you consider with us the fortunes in them—would have you explore with us these beds of pearls.

CHAPTER II

THE CURSE

"Our sins."—I Cor. 15:3.

"Our sins!"

Back behind all human ages these words take us.

Behind all time—into awful, infinite depths.

Back to the most terrible fact of God's universe—the fact of sin, Life's most dreadful and inexorable curse.

Sin, so like a river, beginning in a quiet spring, ending in a tumultuous sea.

Sin—the desert breath that drinks up every dew.

Sin—the death head set amidst Life's feast.

Sin—the power that reversed man's nature, destroyed the harmony of his powers, threw him, woefully deranged, miserable, ungoverned, erratic, lost, into interminable leagues of night.

Sin—the evil that subverted the constitutional order of his nature dismantled him of his nobility, brought him in unconditional surrender to diabolical power, caused him treacherously to give up the keys of the soul's citadel placed in his keeping.

Abroad in this world today are many false conceptions of sin. The literary and aesthetic conception of sin, which says that sin is a "disagreeable hindrance to the smooth on-going of the social machinery." The scientific conception, which says that sin is "an upward stumble in

man's progress." The Ingersollic conception, which says that sin is a "nightmare caused by too much appetite and too little digestion!" The philosophic conception which says, "Sin is youthful indiscretion, egotistic abnormality, perverted taste."

False, false as the teaching of Satan, all these conceptions.

False all conceptions whereby sin is labeled "psychological hysteria," "psychic rebellion," "error," "flaw," "immaturity."

No language lending respectability to sin, improves sin.

You can't improve smallpox by putting the patient in an art gallery. You can't make a pig sty any less a pig sty by planting flowers around it. The dead pollution of leprosy is not lessened by clothing its victims in purple and fine linen.

Sin, the aggregation of all evils, the quintessence of all horrors, entered the world. And death, the sum of all penalties, by sin (Romans 5:12). Soon graves were digged in the earth. Soon there were empty places in households. Eve washing Abel's dead face with tears. Sarah buried in Ephron; Rachel buried in Ephrath. Abraham laid to rest beside Sarah. Jacob on his last journey. Joseph in a coffin in Egypt. David in a tomb. Solomon in a shroud. Ever since the funeral journey has never ceased. Well-trodden the road that leads to the grave—a hard path, solid as lead, without a flower in all its weary miles—the road all human feet must tread!

Evidence this of sin.

Jesus, who found remedies for hunger, disease, mad-

ness, and physical death, who, by a word, hushed storms, was "amazed and sore troubled" by sin's dread power. Its weight fell upon him in soul agony and bloody sweat. From its vast abyss his feet, the feet of Deity, drew back with trembling as he faced the time when he wrought for man deliverance from sin's ruin, when he was made a curse because of sin's curse (Gal. 3:13).

Ghastly great among life's factors, awful, universal, inescapable—this fact of sin.

And if sin becomes an unaffrighting and undisturbing commonplace that never startles us into pain, our preaching, our teaching, our Christian activities, become playthings.

Behind all our phraseology, we must retain the tremendous sense of the ruin of sin, coveting no phraseology that lends it respectability, knowing that we deal, not with trifles and puny pettiness, but with blinding, appalling enormities!

Whatever ignores sin, whether literature, government, drama, religion, preaching, teaching, inevitably fails to declare God's truth—fails to compass the necessities of mankind.

To this shameful failure much modern writing, much modern teaching, some modern preaching, is doomed.

We cannot drown the stench of sin's carrion under flood-tides of philosophical perfume.

Sin, a fatal mischief of the heart, a seed big with future pain and grief, the quintessence of all horrors, the causative element of all world suffering, is no whirlwind creating a slight disturbance, but a hot sirocco blasting all gardens.

No light discord—a thunderbolt that shatters the organ into splinters, leaving it without shape or tone.

No pen knife—a guillotine.

No slight jerk of the hiccoughs—the agonies of sciatica.

No lame Mephibosheth—a diabolical Jezebel.

No crude catapult—a bursting bomb.

No quiet pool—a maelstrom.

No cool rill—a perpetual lava rush scorching its way through green fields.

What say sophistical philosophers, playing with ethical distinctions, calling evil good, and good evil—calling bitter sweet, and sweet bitter, to these questions?

What questions?

These:

Was that a "disagreeable hindrance to the smooth ongoing of the social machinery" which made David, his hands red with Uriah's blood, cry out, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned and done this *great evil* in thy sight"?

Was that an "upward stumble in man's progress" that caused Judas, cast off by his own action from the friendship of God, wildly frantic in the terrible solitude of his own guilty soul, to say, "I have betrayed the innocent blood"?

Was that "psychic rebellion" that caused Herod's wife, in iniquitous pique, to ask, through a flippant dancing maid, the head of John the Baptist on a plate?

Was that "youthful indiscretion" that made the young man in a hotel in New York take his own life after writing and leaving a note in which he stated that he

left to his parents much sorrow in their old age, to his brothers and sisters much dishonor, to his wife the knowledge of marriage vows made perjury, to his children the memory of a drunken father, to God an immortal soul that had defied and insulted his loving mercy?

Was that "perverted taste" which inspired the dying thief, sin's blight behind and sin's night ahead, sin's error behind and sin's terror ahead, to pray, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom"?

Was that "egotistical abnormality" which turned Lady Macbeth into a conscience-scourged somnambulist crying, "Out, out damned spot . . . all the perfumes of Arabia could not sweeten this little hand"?

Was that a "nightmare caused by too much appetite and too little digestion" that stoned Naboth and beheaded James?

Was that "immaturity" that blackened the Doge's palace in Venice, that overthrew the treasure houses of Florence, that ruined the genius of Solomon, that wrecked the palace of David?

Was that "psychological hysteria" that makes millions to testify out of the depths of deep distress, "The wages of sin is death"?

No! No!

Was that an "upward stumble in man's progress" which caused one of Ingersoll's friends to write him, saying, "My principles have poisoned my friends, my extravagance has beggared my children, my unkindness has murdered my wife, and hell itself will be a refuge if it hides me from the face of God"?

Stern fact that magical science, with all its marvelous accomplishments, can't get rid of—sin! For science can nowhere find a sea deep enough to drown remorse or that contains water enough to wash away sin's pollution.

Awful fact that education can't teach away—sin!

Dread disease that all medical skill can't cure—sin!

Black demoniac vulture that all our modes of progress can't outtravel—sin!

Sin is folly, devastation, disorder, death, death—a madness in the brain, a poison in the heart, an opiate in the will, a frenzy in the imagination, a black darkness that invests man's whole moral being!

The intolerable burden of a soul destined to live forever.

The moth and rust that consumes the mind.

The sum of all cruelty, all terror, all wrong, all horror.

Foolish they who tone down sin—applying to it, contrary to the example of the prophets, contrary to the teaching of Christ, soft, extenuating words.

Many quack doctors—some theological, some philosophical, some literary, some political, some scientific —with their poultices, their salves, their liniments arise, claiming to be mighty medicine men, attempting to deal with sin as though it were an eruption of the skin, a scarlet rash, an affliction of pimples.

Sin, an internal cancer, gnaws humanity's vitals. A radical disease, it demands a radical cure.

And the only cure is the cure God gives.

Men jocosely talk about falling upward.

What imbecility!

As Jefferson, with words vivid as lightning, says,

"You never hear of a man falling from the pavement to the top of the Woolworth building. You never hear of an automobile falling upward from the banks of the Potomac to the top of Washington's monument."

No stag, wounded by man's gun, ever fell upward from the clods to the clouds.

No man ever fell from the bottom of a chasm to the top.

To continue in Jefferson's language, you know in the physical universe there is no such thing as falling upward—no such thing as falling upward in any universe.

When a man sins he falls.

He is not on his way to something better. He is on his way to something worse. He is on his way to destruction.

Every sin is a fall, and every fall is downward.

What absurdity—this saying that sin is goodness in the making! Like green melons growing toward ripeness? Like muddy streams going to clearness? Are thieves who come to steal—to kill—to destroy—taking the road to honesty? Do women and men who lost good names through slander believe that slander is truth in the making? Is smallpox health in the making? Is garbage chocolate cake in the making? Are cockle burrs Florida oranges in the making? Is the adder's poison sugar in the making? Was Benedict Arnold General Lee—in the making? Was Catherine de Medici Helen Keller—in the making? Was Nero Spurgeon—in the making? Is a nest of rattlesnakes a chorus of nightingales—in the making? Are mosquitoes honey bees—in the making?

Sin, manifest inwardly in discrowned faculties, in unworthy love, in sordid satisfactions, in brutalized spirits, is the curse of all curses—blighting earth's flowery vales with crime, darkening earth's seas with wrath, grouping earth's isles as lairs of lust, making many places in our cities deserts of hell. It is in all climes, in all times, ruin, wretched ruin.

Sin is a Goliath of power.

Sin is a wild Absalom of rebellion.

Sin is a sullen Macbeth of villainy.

Sin is a greedy Midas of avarice.

Sin is an audaciously loathsome Judas of treachery.

Sin is a thieving Sapphira of falsehood.

Sin is a cruel Ahab of covetousness.

Sin is a destructive Cleopatra of lust.

Sin is a bold Belshazzar of irreverence.

Sin is a bloody Jael of slaughter.

Sin is a merciless Nero of evil.

Sin is an intolerably haughty Nebuchadnezzar of pride.

Sin is a painted Jezebel of murder.

Sin is an ambitious Athaliah of usurpation.

And all these in one.

Ten thousand times ten thousand homes it has broken.

Many nations it has cast upon the tragic ruins of history.

It is more tenacious than the thongs of the devilfish. It is a bloodhound of perdition that never loses a trail.

Like the wine cup, sin first sparkles and glows, but "at last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder" (Prov. 23:32).

All the world's tragedies are really written in one word, one word with three letters—*S I N* .

For sin's flowers grow among skulls and have no perfume.

Sin's crowns of roses are sharper than crowns of thorns, heavier than iron jackets.

All who dance to sin's music weep.

All who dwell in sin's garden dwell in desolation.

Because of sin, every stream with human crime is stained, every breeze with moral miasma corrupted, every day's light blackened, every life's cup tainted with the bitter, every life's roadway made dangerous with pitfalls, every life's voyage made perilous with treacherous shoals.

From hell's seething ocean sin broke out upon this world in Eden's garden—at the foot of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

No bubbling spring, but a raging torrent, it swept through the world until there is no neighborhood from Adam until now that has not felt, and does not feel, its pollution.

Running back to hell as truly as rivers run to seas, sin is the world's widest, deepest, darkest, swiftest river.

Upon its banks only thorns and thistles grow.

Beside its polluted waters no trees are planted.

Perpetual desolation abounds wherever it goes.

Into this river many downward have plunged to perdition's dungeons where hell's "infernal drums roll the eternal bass in hell's uproar, beating time to the ceaseless groans of the lost," amid incessant, unmitigated, unquenchable torment.

There, environed by ghastly horrors, maddened forever by a Babel of howling voices, the lost, lashed by the hot breath of hell's inferno in a storm that knows no abatement, are burning continually, yet unconsumed,—forever wasting, yet enduring still—dying perpetually, yet never dead,—the "smoke of their torment ascending up forever"—Rev. 14:11.

Our one chance, as Newman said, is that we be shocked by sin.

Yes—we must get God's viewpoint of sin, see sin through God's eyes. Otherwise we cannot effectively preach the gospel of our text.

To awaken a sense of sin is the first essential in all missionary, all evangelistic effort.

And the saving of men from sin is the biggest enterprise on earth, for it was the only cause big enough to bring the Son of God from heaven to die on the cross.

Surely, John Fletcher, the Vicar Madeley, was the organ keys beneath God's fingers pressed, when he said: "Take away the doctrine of the fall, and the tower of evangelical truth built by Jesus Christ is no more founded on a rock, but upon the sand; or rather its stately fabric is instantly thrown down and leaves no ruins behind it but the dry morality of Epictetus covered with the rubbish of the wildest metaphors, and buried in the most impertinent ceremonies. Shall we charge the Son of God in whom are hid all treasures of divine wisdom with the unparalleled folly of coming from heaven to atone for innocent creatures, to reprieve persons uncondemned, to redeem a race of free

men, to deliver from the curse a people not accursed, to hang by exquisitely dolorous wounds by his sacred hands on a tree more ignominious than the gallows, for honest men and every sort of people to expire under the sense of the wrath of heaven that he might save from hell people in no danger of going thither?"

Look upon him whom we have pierced!

Our sins were the palms that slapped him, our sins the spit that shamed him, our sins the fists that beat him, our sins the scourge that cut him, our sins the thorns that crowned him, our sins the nails that transfixed him—our hard hearts the hammers that drove the nails.

Surely his crucifixion, the work of the whole race, must shock us until we hate what caused him all that.

Until we look with horror upon our hands red with his blood.

Until every heart must mourn his death of fearsome horrors as its own cruel deed.

"*My sins* laid open to the rod
The back which from the law was free;
And the eternal Son of God
Received the stripes once due to *me!*

"No beam was in his eye, nor mote,
Nor laid to him was any blame;
And yet his cheeks for *me* were smote—
The cheeks that never blushed for shame!

"*I pierced* those sacred hands and feet
That never touched or walked in sin!
I broke the heart that only beat
The souls of sinful men to win.

"The sponge of vinegar and gall
By *me* was placed upon his tongue,
And when derision mocked his call,
I stood that mocking crowd among!"

CHAPTER III

CHRIST

"Christ."—I Cor. 15:3.

CHRIST—by whom Almighty God hath, in these last days, spoken unto us! (Hebrews 1:2).

Christ—"whom God hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds" (Hebrews 1:2).

Christ—"who being the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high!" (Hebrews 1:3).

Christ—"being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they!" (Hebrews 1:4).

Christ—"who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature" (Col. 1:15).

Christ—"who is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence" (Col. 1:18).

Christ in whom, by the pleasure of the Father, all fullness dwells (Col. 1:19).

Christ—"counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house" (Heb. 3:3).

Christ—"called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec" (Heb. 5:10), "who glorified not himself to be made an high priest" (Hebrews 5:5).

Christ—"who, though he were a Son, learned obedience by the things which he suffered, becoming the author of eternal salvation" (Heb. 5:9).

Christ—the outstanding miracle of all the ages.

Literature's loftiest ideal.

Philosophy's highest personality.

Criticism's supremest problem.

Theology's fundamental doctrine.

Spiritual religion's cardinal necessity.

Jesus—personally, socially, politically, the supreme center of human interest today.

Jesus—the standard of measurement, the scale of weights, the test of character for the whole moral universe.

Jesus, two hemispheres full orbed in him, is the ideal for every man of oak and rock—the ideal for every woman representing vine and flower.

As the material world incarnates God's mind, so Jesus incarnates God's heart.

Beginning his ministry hungering, he is, for all time and for all peoples, the Bread of Life.

Ending his ministry thirsty, he is ever the Water of Life.

Though flaring, on occasions, in righteous indignation, he was never irascible, never irritable, never revengeful.

Weary oft, he is the world's only rest.

Paying tribute, though his only pocketbook was the mouth of a fish, he is the King of kings.

Called a devil, he overcame Satan—in the wilderness, on the temple pinnacle, on the mountain top, on the cross.

Called a glutton and a winebibber, he never made a false step (Luke 7:34).

Sold for thirty pieces of silver, he redeemed the world (Matt. 26:15).

Though the Lion of the tribe of Judah and the Good Shepherd, he was led as a lamb to the slaughter (Acts 8:32).

The Light of the World (John 8:12) he hung in darkness on the Cross that dread day when midnight took up its reign on noonday's throne (Matt. 27:45).

The Life, he tasted death for every man (Heb. 2:9).

The Rock of Ages, his feet sank in deep waters.

Separate from sin, holy, undefiled (Heb. 7:26), he was made sin (II Cor. 5:21) when he took the guilty culprit's place on the Cross.

The root and offspring of David (Rev. 22:16) he grew as "a root out of dry ground" (Isa. 53:2).

Chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely, he had, as it is written, no form nor comeliness—"no beauty that we should desire him" (Isa. 53:2).

The Father of eternity, the high and lofty one who inhabiteth eternity (Isa. 57:15) he became the Babe in the cattle trough at Bethlehem.

The mighty God, he was crucified through weakness.

The image of the invisible God (Col. 1:15), his visage was more marred than any man's (Isa. 52:14).

The desire of all nations, he was despised and rejected of men (Isa. 53:3).

The fullness of the Godhead dwelling bodily in him, he took upon himself the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men (Phil. 2:7).

"He spake and it was done" (Psa. 33:9). "He commanded and it stood fast" (Psa. 33:9). Yet he humbled himself and became obedient—obedient unto death!

Wondrous Christ!

His name blossoms on the pages of history like the flowers of a thousand springtimes in one bouquet.

His name sounds down the corridors of the centuries like the music of all choirs, visible and invisible, poured forth in one anthem.

His footsteps, like rain in drouth, are seen in harvests of blessing along life's highways and bypaths.

His influence, like spice gales from heaven, has perfumed the air of all continents.

An ocean he that rolls tidal waves against the shores of twenty centuries.

With no beating of drums, with no blowing of clarions, he has unfolded, and still holds, the flag of equality above palace and slave market.

Though history—ancient, modern, contemporary—bears witness that governments oft ignore him, he stretches the Golden Rule above all laws and statute books.

Though self-exploiting demagogues, swayed by ulterior motives, find nothing desirable for them in his modest ministry, he has caused the State to set guardian angels beside the cradle of each sleeping babe.

Though in collision with the devotees of formalism, he has written "Blessed are the pure in heart" above doorways of vice and crime.

The money changers, expert in illicit traffic and in oppression, despised the young Nazarene.

The knotty lawyers, skillful in turning the law against the innocent, loved him as a wolf loves the man that entraps him.

The scribe, buried in precedents and legalism, hated him.

The infidel Sadducee, with his dogmatic negations, held him in contempt.

The Greek, with his wild mythologies, pitied him for his foolishness.

The Oriental, with his mystic speculations, had no ears to hear his teaching.

The Roman, with his gross materialism, considered what he said and did as the wild nightmare of a disordered brain.

The priest, with his self-righteous creeds, abhorred him.

The stately rabbis looking at him out of envious eyes, considered him the fly in their ointment.

Kings of his day slighted him and the rich sometimes flouted him.

Even his friends, on occasions, thought him beside himself—thought he had "bats in the belfry" (Mark 3:21).

Yet, he has bannered whole continents with love,—has changed the climates of nations.

His fame, ever waxing, never waning—ever increas-

ing, never decreasing—is the most striking fact of our day.

Born among cattle, dying between thieves, the light that began as a taper has waxed into the glory of noonday, and the voice that was whisper has become a thousand trumpets, calling millions to his banner.

In Christ the silence of God breaks into full voice.

For what Christ did, God ever does! What Christ was, God is through all space, throughout all time, to all peoples.

No artist can frame a picture large enough to include all the glories of the evening sunset—when human eyes see the glory of God's robe where the last fires of sunset burn.

So no voice can compass, no pen include, the full statement of Christ's character.

But what he was toward the child and the mother, toward the publican, toward the prodigal, the hypocrite, the harlot, toward sinner and disciple, that is God toward all men in all times, in all places.

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation"—II Cor. 5:19.

"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?"—John 14:9.

"The Father and I are one"—John 10:30.

Jesus is the solvent for all perverse world conditions.

Politics without him degenerates into selfish scheming.

But Christ *in* politics does away with the belief that

politics is a kind of unprincipled national and social protoplasm containing all the germs of villainy, of trickery, of death.

In Christ is healing power for all the industrial wounds now bleeding, or—stinking.

When men cease to be mentally blind, wickedly weak, morally stupid, and try Christ's way as zealously as they apply the methods of militarists, of petty politicians, of scheming profiteers, of godless scientists, we will, through him, sow the world with light and joy, make genius and greatness indigenous.

Then the evils that made Babylon a broken tower for owls, that made Nineveh a dirty door mat for irreverent feet, that made Rome a branchless tree dishonorably fruitless, that made Greece a crumb in history's rubbish heap, that made Egypt a shabby sexton of splendid tombs, that made Spain a drowsy beggar watching a broken clock—evils that threaten to engulf us—will meet defeat.

The Mississippi river flows to the sea. This it has done for thousands of years—watering the fields, slaking the thirst of generations, carrying the ships of man's commerce. Yet no waste nor want does it show.

The rising sun, draping the mountain rim with golden curtains, has melted the snows of many winters, has renewed the verdure of many springs, has painted the flowers of many summers, has ripened the harvest of many autumns.

Yet no less light doth it give for all those centuries of boundless profusion.

Faint images these of him who goes forth conquering and to conquer.

For when judgment flames lick up that flowing stream, and the elements melt with fervent heat (II Peter 3:10), and the light of the sun is quenched in darkness or veiled in the smoke of burning worlds, the matchless fullness of Christ will be as undiminished as ever!

Goldwin Smith said: "At the Reformation Greece rose from the dead with the Greek New Testament in her hand."

Meaning what?

Meaning that, at the Reformation, men began to reconsider Jesus!

And the graves of moribund society gave up their dead.

So today, if men want a genuine revival of spiritual religion, with the fruits thereof, they have to see life with the eyes of Jesus and drink of his spirit—take the way of love they have seen in him and follow it to the Cross.

Jesus pre-existent!

As in a coronation ceremony one rides before the king making proclamation of his rights and claims, challenging dispute, so John, speaking like an archangel amid the eternities, opens his Gospel with the most mysterious sentences that ever illuminated the ages!

These:

"In the beginning was the Word!"

"And the Word was with God."

"And the Word was God."

"And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us!"

"And we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of God."

And Paul, in elaborate argument, says "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist"—Col. 2:16-17. "Without him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:3). "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds" (Heb. 1:1-2).

Jesus "having glory with the Father before the world was" (John 17:5), "loved by the Father before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24).

Jesus virgin-born!

When Mary, virgin highly blessed among women, virgin greatly favored of God, virgin overshadowed by the power of the highest (Luke 1:35), virgin by man never touched (Isa. 2:14), went down into the mysterious land of motherhood in Bethlehem's barn, she, the mother destined to know multiplied sorrows, came back holding in her arms the eternal Son of God! (Luke 1:35).

And his every muscle was a pulley divinely swung, his every nerve divine handwriting, his every bone divine sculpture, his every heart-beat divine pulsation, his every breath holy whisper.

God's thought, God's will, God's purpose, swathed in mortality, was he.

Milton puts it right:

> "That glorious form, that light insufferable
> And that far-beaming blaze of majesty,
> Wherewith he wont at heaven's high council table
> To sit the midst of Tribal Unity,
> He laid aside; and here with us to be,
> Forsook the court of everlasting day,
> And chose with us a darksome house of clay!"

And Christ's virgin birth, on which rests the credibility of the Scriptures and the sinlessness of Jesus, is the Alpha of our Christian faith.

Accept that, all else rightly follows.

But reject that—accept the impious conclusions of modern skepticism, that Jesus was *earth* born, not *heaven* born, then, with this bar-sinister stained across his birth hour, Christianity is falsehood, civilization is delusion, all history is fathomless riddle, the whole story of Jesus is assailable.

Jesus, Son of man.

Jesus, Son of God!

And both in one!

As man, he got tired; as God he said "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28).

As man, he got hungry; as God he fed thousands with a lad's lunch (John 6:9).

As man, he got thirsty; as God he gave living water (John 4:10).

As man, he prayed; as God, he made, in praying, no confession of sin.

As man, he was tempted in all points like as we are; as God, he was without sin, baffling his enemies with the question, "Who convinceth me of sin?" (John 8:46).

As man, he slept; as God, he arose from sleep and stilled the raging tempest.

As man, he sorrowed over separation from friends; as God, he promised never to leave them comfortless, and to come to them (John 14:18).

As man, a ship carried him: as God, he walked on the rolling, tumbling sea (John 6:19).

As man, he accepted a village girl's invitation to her wedding; as God, he there changed water into wine.

As man, he was despised of men; as God, "all the angels of God worship him" (Heb. 1:6).

As man, he got lonely; as God, he said "The Father hath not left me alone" (John 9:29).

As man, he longed for human companionship and sympathy; as God, he "trod the wine-press alone" (Isa. 63:3).

As man, he wept at Lazarus' grave; as God, he raised Lazarus from the dead.

As man, he grew in wisdom and stature; as God, he "upholdeth all things by the word of his power" (Heb. 1:3).

Jesus, teacher come from God!

"Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46).

Put the teachings of all philosophers alongside the teaching of Jesus.

What is the difference?

A difference vast, even this difference:

Their teaching is speculation; his, revelation.

Their teaching is inquiry; his, declaration.

Their teaching is surmise; his, certainty.

Their teaching is groping; his, guidance.

For boldness of conception, for grandeur of character, for sublimity of purpose, for originality of mind, for valiant propagandism his teaching, no exhausted specific, claims the sovereignty of the world.

Amid all teachers, he burns like the sun amid lanterns.

Amid all teachers, he towers like a mountain above an ashheap.

His teaching, leaping across conventional chasms, spurning all national boundaries, assaults all superficial teachings as summer suns attack frost.

Teaching in paradoxes, superlatively supreme is Jesus.

Lose life, find life.

Hold by letting go.

Win by losing.

Multiply by dividing.

Live by dying.

Be wise by being foolish.

Increase by diminishing.

As teacher, he dwells apart in his unrivaled genius—a great palm in a desert of mediocrity.

Jesus, miracle worker!

Blind men he gave sight. Deaf men he gave keen ears. Dumb men he gave new tongues. Crippled men he gave new limbs and supple muscles. Crazy men he restored to reason. Lepers he cleansed. Outcast women he lifted up. Devils he cast out. The sick he healed. Funeral

processions he broke up. Showing what? That in his own universe God is no prisoner. No law-limited God. But sovereign. No superannuated butler, having lost the keys to some doors in his own world-house. But Lord indeed.

In all, Christ was the life—God felt, the Word—God heard, the light—God seen.

Jesus, the Light of the World.

Borrowing the center of the solar system to interpret his nature and character, he said, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12).

A sunless solar system is the counterpart of a Christless world.

Everywhere the fertilizing wonder of light confronts us.

Anywhere and everywhere we are in the presence of light's begetting power! Take away the sun—no vegetable or animal life on this globe. The sun is the seat of all that is beautiful and fair on earth and sea and sky!

But no sun—no life. No life anywhere.

Think of a world without light—a world solid, impalpable darkness always,—and you have some conception of a Christless world.

No Socrates, no youth of Athens aroused.

No Columbus, no new world in prophetic possibility.

No John Knox, no Scotland saved.

No John Huss, no hope for Bohemia.

No Gutenberg, no printing press to widen the blind alley of ignorance into endless highways of wisdom.

No Luther, no corrupt church broken, rebuked.

No Copernicus, no discovery of new universes in the skies.

No Wycliff, no first light of the Reformation.

No Cromwell, no Parliament dissolved.

No Wesley, no spiritual rain in Europe's drouth of years.

No Charles Martel, the Mohammedan shadow crushes the world.

No Puritan fathers, no free republic.

No Washington, no victory after Valley Forge.

So! No Jesus, no freedom of thought.

No Jesus, no liberty of worship and conscience.

No Jesus, no humanity of feeling for the unfortunate.

No Jesus, no civic righteousness, no national integrity, no salvation from sin.

The "life in him—the light of men" (John 1:4).

Taking Jesus from history is like taking matter out of physics, heat out of fire, fragrance out of flowers, numbers out of mathematics, mind out of metaphysics, cause and effect out of philosophy.

Without Jesus,—the world's history is a diabolical joke.

Without Jesus—all liberty-compelling upheavals of all centuries are dead.

Without Jesus, "the Roman Empire is without purpose, Athens without a mission, Egypt an accident." Without Jesus, Judaism, with its thousands of years of prophecy, is the frightful mutterings of a race doomed to insanity.

Without Christ, the poets, prophets, seers, priests, martyrs of all years lived and died without hope.

Christ!

The world over, architects, striving to build cathedrals worthy of him, fall short of their high objectives.

Painters, vieing with painters, feel incompetent to create figures beautiful enough to adorn his sanctuary walls.

A sense of inadequacy falls oppressively upon musicians who try to create music sweet enough for his hymns of praise.

Sculptors, searching all quarries, nowhere can find marble white enough for his forehead.

Orators, whose sentences are flights of golden arrows, express only a meager measure of the honor due him.

Writers, words dropping from their pens like golden pollen from stems of shaken lilies, feel the inadequacy of all words to set him forth in his beauty.

Devout poets, reaching from pole to pole with the wings of their poetic genius, struggle for some metaphor with which to express him.

Profound scholars, rushing with archangelic splendor through mysterious realms of thought, light their brightest torches at his altar fires.

> "No mortal can with him compare,
> Among the sons of men,
> Fairer is he than all the fair
> Who fill the heavenly train."

A thrilling record of goodness—goodness shining through every feature, goodness suggesting every thought, goodness ennobling every action, goodness

clothing every utterance with beauty, was the life of Jesus.

There are no arms like his arms to welcome a prodigal back—no arms like his to lift the fallen from shades of night to plains of light.

There is no thought like his thought to give new brilliancy to the mind and wider swing and reach to all the intellectual faculties.

There is no fullness like the fullness that comes from him "in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9).

There is no completeness to flow around humanity's incompleteness like unto the completeness we have in him who is "the head of all principality and power" (Col. 2:10).

There is no glory like the glory of the glorified Man who glorified God on earth, who is now crowned on high.

Let us, in this thought, linger lovingly on Lanier's lines:

"But Thee, but Thee, O sovereign Seer of time,
But Thee, O poet's Poet, Wisdom's Tongue,
But Thee, O man's best Man, O love's best Love,
O perfect life in perfect labor writ,
Of all men's comrade, Servant, King, or Priest,—
What *if* or *yet*, what mole, what flaw, what lapse,
What least defect or shadow of defeat,
What rumor tattled by an enemy,
Of inference loose, what look of grace
Even in torture's grasp, or sleep's, or death's,—
Oh, what amiss may I forgive in Thee,
Jesus, good Paragon, Thou crystal Christ?"

Without Christ, the past is cruel enigma!

Without him, the present is tormenting perplexity!

Without him, the future is awful, inevitable catastrophe!

CHAPTER IV

CALVARY

"Christ *died!*"—I Cor. 15:3.
"And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him."—Luke 23:33.

CHRIST died!
Christ died for our sins!
So saith the Scriptures.
Christ!
And Calvary!
And *crucifixion* on Calvary!

For that reason, greatly above and beyond all mountains stands Calvary.

Great is Sinai, sublime in solitude, robed in clouds, shrouded in smoke, illuminated with fire, where, with heaven's earthquake thunders rumbling amid the crags and gorges—where, with the lightnings blazing in zigzag paths across the dark clouds, the law was given—commandments which are not the ghostly whispers of a dead century, but commandments as authoritative today as when their proclamation broke the age-long silence of the desert.

Grand is old Horeb where the bush, aflame with the glory of descendent Deity, defied the laws of conflagration (Exodus 3:3).

And Hor, where, his spirit ready to wing its flight

to realms of day, Aaron transferred his priestly robes to his son, and died (Num. 33: 38-39).

And Pisgah, from whose lofty height Moses saw the land which God "sware unto Abraham" (Deut. 34:4).

And Ebal and Gerezim, from whose neighboring sides the blessings and the curses were pronounced (Deut. 11:26).

And Carmel where God answered Elijah's prayer with fire from heaven (I Kings 18:38).

And Tabor, in whose shadow and on whose slopes the stars in their courses fought with Barak and his ten thousand men to overthrow Sisera and his hosts (Judges 5:20).

And Moriah where, under the leadership of Solomon, one hundred and sixty thousand men toiled seven and one-half years to build the holy and beautiful Temple.

And triple-peak Hermon where Jesus was transfigured, his countenance brighter than the sun, his garments whiter than snow.

And Olivet, Olivet of sweet farewell memories, where, with the clouds as his chariot and the winds as his steeds, he went back to God.

But above and beyond all mountains as a skyscraper is above a dugout in height, as a tree is beyond a twig in fruit bearing, as a cannon is beyond a popgun in far-reaching power, is Calvary.

For there, God in bloody garments dressed, courted our love.

There, at the interlocking of the ages, Christ put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, redeeming man from death unto life, canceling man's debt of judicial obliga-

tion by an equivalent which afforded legal satisfaction—voluntarily passing under death's dreadful shadow, though owing the law no debt.

There, with power to smite his enemies with a thunderbolt, he elected to die on a cross.

There, God's eternal attributes emptied their vials of burning wrath upon the sinless Sacrifice in agony enough to make the earth shudder, the sun in darkness hide, the spheres go wailing along their eternal circuits.

There God, the father of the clouds (Job 38:28), permitted him to thirst who came to remove the moral thirst of mankind.

There God, who clothes the valleys with corn (Psa. 65:13), and feeds the young ravens when they cry, left him naked under the darkening sky and answered not his cry.

No wonder the heavens went black and the sun withdrew its light and the earth reeled in its steady course, as in astonishment that love so sweet, so vast, should meet a doom so fearful.

No wonder that all the people came together to that sight, beholding the things that were done—beholding Love incarnate rejected, crucified, tortured,—beholding the way in which men treat the embodied perfection of virtue, and then and there smote their breast and returned sorrowing (Luke 23:48).

No wonder the rocks rent—the rocks less hard than men's hearts that day—as though shattered that so great a love could find so ungrateful a return.

Earth has no darker sin, history no blacker page,

humanity no fouler spot, than that of the Saviour's crucifixion.

Irreproachable Christ's life.

Matchless Christ's teaching.

Astonishing Christ's miracles.

Marvelous Christ's example.

But all of these would have availed nothing for our salvation had they not found consummation in the Cross.

Incidental and collateral all these to the one purpose for which he came—to die, that man born once and born dead might be born again and born alive.

Not by his sinless life was Jesus man's substitute.

Not by his miracles did he honor the law, satisfy justice, meet the demands of divine holiness.

Not by his teachings did he take away humanity's despairing woe and God's judgment upon the human race.

Not by his beautiful example did he take our place under the law.

Not by his preaching did he open a fountain for all uncleanness.

Not by his character did he repair the insulted dignity of God's nature by a reparation equal in merits to the character of the insulted dignity itself.

Only by suffering the death which was expiatory with reference to God, which was punishment with reference to men, did he adequately compensate God's government by an equivalent for man' offense—offer a boundless mercy in terms consistent with the integrity of the moral law.

In death divine purpose of his life is revealed. He was made "lower than the angels" in order to die for all. The aim of his life was his death.

In death, he paid our debt.

"The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 3:6).

"The chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Isa. 53:5).

The Bible contains the saddest story of man and the saddest story of God. Together they make the saddest story of the ages.

The sadness of the story of man began in surroundings that were perfect.

Man himself, perfect, robed in garments of righteousness, drinking from a life-giving stream, eating from the fruit of the trees of the garden, breathing the breath of the Almighty, was endowed with the power of choice.

In Eden man fell. This began the saddest story of man.

Its tragic color is seen in the blood of righteous Abel.

Its sadness is seen in the shame of a drunken Noah.

Its confusion is seen in the plain of a babbling Shinar.

Its oppression is seen in the servitude of Egypt's bondage.

Its bitterness is testified to in the sting of the serpents in the wilderness.

Its manifold tragedies are seen in the captivity of Babylon, in the sin of David, in the vanity of Solomon, in the betrayal and crucifixion of the Nazarene.

And—in many other things.

But no man can know the fullness of the sadness of

the fall unless he fathom the bottom of the bottomless pit, unless he grope in the outer darkness, unless he weep and wail in hell where race and foam forever the waves of quenchless fire.

If there is no fall, no hell, there is no salvation to preach.

The saddest story of God is Calvary.

Taking its rise in God's love, conceived in the councils of eternity, from age to age, receiving ever new fulfillment, Calvary's history goes.

A far cry it is from the garden of Eden to Calvary, but they have very intimate relations. The tragedy of one is the reason for the tragedy of the other. In Eden we see the beginning of the tragedy which is to end on Calvary, and the agony of atonement for sin which we see on Calvary has to do with the tragedy of sin which we learn in the garden of Eden.

Calvary casts its shadow and blessed radiance from Golgotha through the stormy chasm of human history to the foundation of the world!

And from Golgotha, the place of a skull, to Pilate's court, where, with scourge, they seamed his quivering flesh until it started up in red scars.

And on to Gethsemane's garden, where the roots of his divine emotion put forth their crimson tears.

And on to the upper room, where he changed wine into the perpetual symbol of his blood.

And on to the Mount of Transfiguration where Moses and Elijah talked of his coming death (Matt. 17:3).

Reaching to the Jordan, where his burial in baptism foreshadowed his death.

Reaching to Nazareth, where by the toil of his hands and the sweat of his brow, in the carpenter shop, he sanctified all labor.

Reaching to Bethlehem, "where that glorious form wherewith he wont at heaven's high council table to sit the midst of Tribal Unity he laid aside."

And from Bethlehem, where heaven put out its brightest star to mark his birthplace, across four dumb centuries, and beyond, the Cross throws its shadows and immortal radiance—to Solomon's temple!

And over the victim, whether lamb, or bullock, or turtle dove, on the altar of the Tabernacle.

And over the blood-stained lintels of the Passover night, where the keynote of the Cross sounded forth in the depths of remote antiquity and foreshadowed a deliverance far greater.

And beyond that to the withered garden where Despair pitched his pavilions upon the sterile and blasted fields of man's lost estate.

"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15).

That promise, dropped as a sun into man's sunless firmament, was the center, prospectively, of all these constellations which were to succeed each other in the darkness and illuminate that long way unbroken from Eden to Calvary—Calvary, the abyss of the world's greatest sorrow, the summit of the world's highest hopes.

And our text is a sublime paraphrase of the Genesis

verse, substituting the language of fulfillment for the language of prediction.

His death, prearranged, prophesied, provided by God (Gen. 22:8), was no afterthought.

Jesus was born with the shadow of the Cross upon him.

With the shadow of the Cross upon his heart he learned to walk, he learned to talk, he learned to work. From his earliest moment upon this earth it was his burden by day, his pallet by night.

Shadow of the Cross upon the Bethlehem swaddling clothes.

Shadow of the Cross upon the road over which Joseph and Mary, warned by an angel, and in fear of King Herod, fled to Egypt.

Shadow of the Cross upon the walls of the Nazareth carpenter shop.

Shadow of the Cross upon the waters of Lake Galilee —waters placid in the quiet of a peaceful day, or turbulent under the lash of a tempest.

Shadow of the Cross on the well curb at Sychar, on the door of the Temple, on sunrise, on sunset.

Shadow of the Cross upon Gethsemane's garden.

The Cross was with him when they came with lanterns and torches to arrest the Light of the world.

The Cross was with him when Judas, one of the twelve, betrayed him with a kiss which startled him like the kiss of an adder and burned his cheek like hot coals.

The Cross was with him when Annas asked him concerning his disciples and concerning his doctrine.

The Cross was with him when Caiaphas condemned him.

The Cross was with him when Herod mocked him.

He walked the streets dishonored by its shame.

He climbed Olivet oppressed by its weight.

He rose from the dead glorified by its sacrifice.

As the mind existed before mental philosophy, as stars existed before Newton wrote his *Principia*, as this continent lay behind the setting sun long before Columbus thought of a nearer passage to India, as electricity was in the universe long before Edison, so the Cross, not an episode but an eternal mood in God's heart, not an incident of Christ's life, not an accident in his career, not a device to meet an emergency, not merely a moral spectacle to exhibit God's love, but a transaction grounded in deep necessity, was in heaven before it was on Calvary.

A sword pierced the heart of the Father long before it entered the heart of Mary.

Before Time commenced its solemn march did divine Love consider man's ruined condition and resolve not to spare the greatest gift which either time could know or eternity produce.

A love it was that stretched not only over the long centuries of time, but through the aeons of eternity—a love anticipating the vast need before it had arisen.

Thus, in the Cross, the supreme interpretation of God, we see that the agony of God over human sin is eternal—a focus in time and space of that travail which God bears from the foundation of the world.

"Him being delivered by the determinate council and

foreknowledge of God . . . crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23).

"Eternal life, . . . promised before the world began" (Titus 1:2).

"We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, which God ordained before the world unto our glory" (I Cor. 2:7).

Knowing the end from the beginning (Psa. 46:10),

"His holy fingers formed the bough
Where grew the thorns that crowned his brow,
The nails that pierced the hands were mined
In secret places he designed.

Knowing that he was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8),

"He made the forests whence there sprung
The tree on which his holy body hung,
He died upon a cross of wood
Yet made the hill upon which it stood.

Acquainted with the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,

"The sun which hid from him its face
By his decree was poised in space.
The sky which darkened o'er his head
By him above the earth was spread.

Foreordained before the foundation of the world,

"The spear that spilt his precious blood
Was tempered in the fires of God.
The grave in which his form was laid
Was hewn in rocks his hands had made."

We utterly despair of ever finding any words adequate to express so large a fact.

But Christ's face was set toward Calvary before aught of creation from the womb of nothingness came.

The centuries from Adam to Christ were crimson with the blood of innocent victims killed as types of the slain Lamb of God.

The diversified, systematic sacrifices of the Jews, like finger posts along the highway of time, pointed worshipers to a sacrificial Saviour.

Significant shadows of redemptive entity still ahead, adumbrations of a substance yet to come, by the blood of a thousand altars, these sacrifices, elemental, preparatory, preliminary, rudimental, introductory, pointed to Christ, the propellent center to which the faith of mankind before and since gravitated.

There is a theology that counts such truth too vulgar to be attributed to divine ordinances, but to be viewed as belonging to the grosser mind of man in his unrefined stages of development.

But men libel God and label the Bible a lie by believing anything contrary to the truth, or by preaching or by teaching anything contrary to the truth that the blood stream was ordained of God.

The promise to fallen man in Eden means Christ.

All the ceremonies of Judaism mean Christ.

The music of Israel's sweetest harps means Christ.

The light that burns in prophecy means Christ.

And—nowhere do we find hope, nowhere find a road to victory over evil in the hearts of men, until we come to

. . . "A green hill far away,
Without a city wall,
Where the dear Lord was crucified
Who died to save us all."

"Christ *died*."

"Christ died for *our sins*."

"Christ died for our sins *according to the scriptures*."

"He was buried."

"He rose again the third day according to the scriptures."

This is the ground of our hope.

This is our gospel.

This gospel, simply and sublimely stated, is our only watch cry of spiritual triumphs in this day when everything for which apostles, martyrs, and reformers lived and died is being whittled away, when there is hardly enough fire in men's hearts to melt the lead in their feet.

This message, which our forefathers preached with rattle of chains amid the heat of the martyr's stake and in the dark of dungeons, is our message!—the message written in the blood of Christ and fastened with the nails of the Cross.

So we must proclaim the Cross—that which seemed to be Christ's shame, glorying in what seemed to be the hour of his collapse, emphasizing what seemed to be his defeat.

Preach it, not submit it for subdued discussion in the academic grove!

Preach it, not with piping voice, but with trumpet tones.

Preach it.

Not as epicures in philosophies.

Not as feeders of inflamed popular appetite for amusement.

Not as administrators of laughing gas for the painless extraction of sin.

Not as dainty tasters of intellectual subtleties.

Not as experts in speculative cleverness dealing in the airy abstractions of an "up-to-date" gospel

Not as dealers in fine-spun metaphysical disquisitions.

But with wooing urgency that lifts up the crucified Christ and warns men of the "wrath of God revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness" (Rom. 1:18).

Else our churches will be lighthouses without water, barren fig trees, sleeping watchmen, silent trumpets, dumb witnesses, messengers without tidings, a comfort to infidels, a hot bed for formalism, a joy to the devil, an offense to God.

By his Cross, not by the disquisitions of philosophers, not by the exhortations of moralists, regenerate health comes.

The great salient is that Jesus died!

Yes, Jesus died an initial death, as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world! Jesus died an official death, as the God-selected substitute! Jesus died a judicial death, a judgment death for others! Jesus died a sacrificial death, the just for the unjust (I Peter 3:18).

And with his dying, the colossal system of Judaism passed away.

Its bloody altars drifted into oblivion.

Its priestly vestments were flung aside.

The ceremonial law, with its mystic rites and interposed barriers, was abrogated.

Jesus took all these rites, types, symbols, to the Cross and nailed them there, "blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Col. 2:14).

These types are remembered now only to interpret them in the light of Christ's redemption.

They were redemption *symbolized*—the sacrifice offered by human hands. Himself is redemption *realized*—the Lamb slain.

Coming up from Edom with dyed garments, from Bozrah, glorious in his apparel (Isa. 63:1), traveling in the greatness of his strength, he retrod the way of man's retreat, opened the way to the tree of life, liquidated the bond of inexorable law, sheathed the sword of justice behind the blood-drenched Mercy Seat. Then God's perfections opened wide their arms repentant sinners to receive!

In all this we rejoice.

For the fingers of prophecy *point* to Calvary! The incarnation was *preparatory* to Calvary! The transfiguration *foreshadowed* Calvary! Pentecost was the *fruit* of Calvary!

And as the rays of glory emanating from Christ find focus in Calvary, so, at Calvary, the history of human guilt culminates—the purposes of divine love become intelligible—the mysteries of prophecy are

unraveled—the majesty of the law is vindicated—the great problem of human redemption is solved.

At Calvary all human sorrows hide in his wounds!

At Calvary the hieroglyphics of the types find their key.

At Calvary Satan's armor is removed.

At Calvary the fires of the law are extinguished.

At Calvary the penal claims of God against us are exhausted.

At Calvary every righteous judgment of God is perfectly met.

At Calvary our condemnation is lifted.

At Calvary the death of sin is made certain.

At Calvary our death sentence is revoked.

At Calvary the serpent's head is bruised.

At Calvary the door of heaven is opened.

At Calvary the fountain of salvation is unsealed.

At Calvary the world is stripped of its charms.

At Calvary the bitters of life are sweetened.

At Calvary the shadows of death are dispelled.

At Calvary the darkness of eternity is irradiated!

His Cross has become the rendezvous and universal resort of the chief of sinners.

The desire of all nations was never found until Christ was crucified.

But Christ crucified, like a divine loadstone, has drawn to Calvary a multitude, that no man can number, of guilty hearts, of bleeding hearts, of broken hearts.

The Cross, the true center and sanctuary of this fallen and broken world, is the only leverage mighty

enough to roll off crushed humanity the ponderous incubus which bondage to Satan had placed upon it.

"Near the Cross! O Lamb of God,
Bring its scenes before me;
Help me walk from day to day,
With its shadows o'er me!

"Near the Cross, a trembling soul,
Love and mercy found me;
There the Bright and Morning Star
Shed its beams around me!

"Near the Cross I'll watch and wait,
Hoping, trusting ever,
Till I reach the golden strand,
Just beyond the river!"

CHAPTER V

CONSTRAINT

"For the love of Christ constraineth us. . . .; he died for all, that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves but unto him who died for them, and rose again." —II Cor. 5:14-15.

We go not from a highway to a bypath when we speak of the constraint of Calvary.

We go not from a parlor to a cellar when we speak now of the constraint—the constraint of the Cross.

The Cross constraint, only that, can compass our necessities.

Truth on the altar will more adequately and more quickly triumph than truth in the controversial arena, or on the billboard, or on the adding machine.

Subterfuges, stop-gap performances, argumentative appeals with subtle suggestions of self-pity in them, will fail.

Run these roads how we will, we seek power and victory by ways that never lead to it.

But, under the constraint of the Cross, which "bids us not stand nor sit but go," we shall avoid being "bound who should conquer," shall avoid being "slaves who should be kings," shall avoid "hearing our one hope with an empty wonder," shall keep ourselves from being "sadly contented with a show of things."

Not only so.

We shall be kept from a passive acquiesence in small attainments, from slothful timidity in daring, from careless indifference to great stretches of the unattained, from tepid supineness in the face of unscaled peaks that await the pilgrim feet of spiritual pioneers.

What urged early Christians along life's highway?

What gave them joy in hardships, hazards, sufferings?

What drove them towards mobbings, scourgings, prisons, unto death itself?

The words "The love of Christ constraineth me" hold the secret.

They found unflustered sufficiency in the Cross.

So shall we.

Duties God-sent, opportunities God-arranged, privileges heaven-born are ours. Therefore, heroism we must manifest—a heroism eclipsing the heroism born of the bloody ministry of war.

So, in words vivid as lightning, Jesus warns against the atrophy of heroism!

A vast Vanity-Fair is in our country, of artificial beauty parlors, jazz orchestras, comic strips, shrieking posters, night clubs, cocktail-crusaders, bathing reviews, bootleggers, flippant marathons, tom-tom dances, idle parties playing bridge, itching ears, folks giving heed to "raucous cheapjacks shouting palpable lies"—jaded folks seeking thrills, dancing to the music of self-indulgence, chasing short-lived butterflies of pleasure, pottering with shabby nothings in cheap shams of deception.

But how revoltingly cheap and worthless and un-

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heroic this way of life looks as people remember Jesus on the Cross.

By his Cross he shows us how poor many things we count great, how shoddy our splendor, how tawdry our luxury, how worthless many things about which we boast.

Fearsomely easy it is to take the Cross for granted, to be no different because of that tremendous fact.

But there is no possibility of following Christ except by living the crucified life!

The Cross stands between us and God's wrath—so that now the community between Jesus and sinners is real, the community of their debt on one side and his merit on the other.

But let us not forget that the Cross should also stand between us and the great world system of sin and pleasure.

We need to think in terms of the Cross, in all things applying it as our standard, carrying it daily through life's multitudinous details, meeting our tasks in its spirit.

Today, men, slaves of wrong values, bound to the world's view of success, love the rewards, not the risks, of the Christian life.

Ornamental cross *wearing* is more popular than sacrificial cross *bearing*.

But to follow Christ is to get his Cross so in our minds that it becomes the standard by which we judge everything, a watershed which shows through all we think and are and do, the solemn background before which our whole life is enacted.

Shall we extol the bleeding sacrifice of Calvary?—praise the martyrs whose blood stained the mouths of lions?—eulogize the saints who went to the stake or dungeon, and then, when our turn comes to sacrifice, ask for ether?—act as though the symbols of our faith were silken slippers or downy chairs?

Shall we sing of the crucifixion and preach a crucified Christ as pantomime?

Shall we continue to exhibit the weakness of modern Christianity in its deceptive views as to the cost of spiritual power?

Shall we have no suggestion of the thorn crown and the nail prints about us?

Shall we be easy, untroubled, satisfied, facing the world's need and wreck?

Do we know Christ in any real way if we remain unconcerned?—having not his sorrow for sin, having not his passion for souls?

Challenged by the world's great need, holding in our hands limitless resources—what will we do?

Has not Christ waited long enough for us to crown him Lord of all?

Has he not waited all too long already for us to take from his brow, scarred for us, the crown of thorns set there by scoffing men and place thereon the crown of the kingdoms of the earth?

A Jewish Rabbi recently said: "The Jews have rejected Christ, and Christians have disgraced him." He charges that by our worldiness we misrepresent Christ's spiritual teachings. He says that we, by our pride, misrepresent Christ's humility. He accuses us of being guilty of the

lack of heroism and loyalty, by which we misrepresent Christ's Cross!

Speaks the Rabbi truth?

Robert Speer recently speared us when he said: "After thirty years of leadership in missionary work it is my conclusion and conviction that the greatest missionary problem is just the failure of Christian people to live up to their professions."

Is Speer right?

Another, a Mr. Johnston, a soldier of the Cross of Jesus, has, with regret, dared to say this: "The chief obstacle to the spread of Christianity is not Hinduism, not Buddhism, not even paganism, but the rotten behaviour of people who call themselves Christians."

Has this good man spoken words of truth and soberness?

Such things could never be *true* of us if we apply the principles of his Cross to our conduct—make its spirit regnant in politics, in business, in kingdom battles, in the tasks of God! Such things could never be *thought* of us, even momentarily, if we test our convictions, our inheritances, by the tests of the Cross—subdue every region of our lives to its imperial concern.

The only marks of victory Christ bears are the wounds of Calvary.

Have we forgotten what a claim these scars constitute upon every life they have redeemed and their tenderly mighty appeal as they bid us share his crucifixion?

"Hath he marks to lead me to him
If he be my guide?

In his feet and hands are woundprints
And his side.

"Is there diadem, as monarch,
That his brow adorns?
Yes, a crown in very surety,
But of thorns."

Much it will mean if we can meet him, arm in arm with Paul, able to match Paul's statement, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus,"—able to match Bunyan's testimony, "My marks and scars I carry with me to show I have fought his battles well."

Life and progress are inspirational—not mechanical.

So—the necessity and value of the Cross, the dynamic of personal life.

Today, black snow falls! The fever of life's fierce heat burns the divine dew off the grass!

Spiritual mercury falls low!

Critical Philistines of transcendent cleverness subject the warm wonder of Christianity to cool analysis!

Faith's wings are clipped by reason's scissors!

Fat deformities ask the world to substitute for Christianity's bread "a chunk of cloud bank buttered with the night wind."

And our unregenerate humanity is set in the midst of palaces, art, philosophies, scientific wonders, but remains a bedraggled beggar still, while many Christians are frostbitten in realms of luxury.

So the Cross is our superlative, our supreme, inspiration.

As Christians, in danger of making a show before the world, doing too little in demonstrating the power and

the message of the Holy Spirit, our hope is the proclamation and practice of the Calvary gospel.

In this unreconciled, alienated, dislocated, sin-troubled, sin-saddened world, cluttered up with conceits, with things inchoate, with things inordinate, multitudes from all nations turn to us.

From Europe—peoples burdened, peoples bitter, in the near shadow of a quadrennium of blood and tears and the nearer shadow of atheistic orgies.

From Mexico—peoples clouded with age-long superstition, halted at Guadalupe when they ought to go on to Calvary, our near neighbors in geography, needing to be our close brothers in Christ.

From the Philippines—folks physically freed by Dewey's guns, intellectually freed by educational missionaries from America, some already freed from bondage to relics and friars because of the gospel's liberating truth.

From Japan—peoples with their shrewd eyes that see everything, with their polite eyes that stare at nothing, agile seekers for the world's trade and oriental rulership. Perils they if they get the coarse power of our civilization without knowing its redeeming author, possibilities if their leadership of the yellow races comes itself under the leadership of the Lord, who, being national, is still universal.

From Korea—multitudes bearing the pathetic despair of their own nationality, and the curse of sin.

From Africa—black millions from the land where Livingstone died, where heroes who saw clearly and dared valiantly in their obedience to the heavenly

vision, left white tombstones to mark the highway over which Ethiopia stumbles with hands stretched out to God.

From China—millions who are waking from the sleep that made them slaves of a long and drowsy past, their eyes still on ancestral tombs, their hands clumsily feeling the levers that may mean danger for the world, until such time as they see Christ's Cross, yellow hordes if captured by the militaristic devil, golden throngs if marshaled by the Prince of Peace, who alone can be trusted with their awful power.

From India—her lines of cruel caste waiting for erasure by the pierced hand of the impartial Christ.

From all nations—multitudes unled and misled, multitudes knowing not our God, multitudes whose hearts within them are desolate.

Our commission is, "Go and disciple all nations."

Our assurance is, "I am with you."

Knowing this, we must conceive a providence which encircles the world.

We must proclaim the vastness of the divine orbit.

We must acknowledge the tremendous sweep of the divine decrees.

Our Southland, with its imperial advantages, resources, opportunities, has imperial responsibility. And that responsibility, in these hours big with destiny, is for the world's lost millions. Nothing—neither poverty nor pestilence nor famine nor any other creation—exempts us from this responsibility.

Our circumstances do not offer soldiers of the Cross an easy parade ground, where we can loll and sing our

lilting songs; they rather offer hard, broken fields which demand as heroic and chivalrous virtues as ever clothed a child of God.

May the Cross, therefore, claim us.

May the Cross haunt us!

May the Cross lay compulsion upon us.

Behind paltry revenues, behind frail instruments, behind erring agents, the Cross works with irresistible efficiency.

Having big conventions will not suffice.

Brooding on blunders will not suffice.

Mustering big numbers will not suffice.

Having only abstract recognition of the claims of Jesus will not suffice.

Not one of these things.

Not *all* of these things.

But laying down our lives.

Any cheaper process is doomed to failure.

Facing our most compelling hour, our biggest opportunity, since Calvary, we wake to the challenge with vast plans, with machinery, with publicity, with executive ability.

But we must do more than maintain great organizations and project world-wide plans. Anything an asset we must use.

But our lives we must lay down. Else we shall limp on in a lame old way.

Nothing is won without sacrifice, nothing held without blood.

Can we—will we?—lay down our lives?

This, under God, will lift us from mediocrity to genius!

This, only this, will lift us from provincialism into world citizenship!

This, just this, will lift us from defeat to victory.

With the Cross our experience, not a mere historical statement, we will be lifted from pride to humility, from passion to poise, from selfishness to renunciation, from rolling marbles to removing mountains, from contentment with corners to conquest of continents.

So long as Southern Baptists have a passion for the salvation of sinners everywhere, there is little danger of our drifting into materialism—little danger of our frittering away our energies in "the ethical development of the world."

But, if we give up our position as an evangelistic storm center and court riches and court fashion and court the friendships of self-elected scholars with bloodless gospels, we shall not be found following in Christ's train.

If we seek the approval of religious bodies with spiritual latitudes wide as the Sahara desert and correspondingly dry, we do err greatly—even foolishly.

In these days of molluscous liberalism, of self-satisfied complacency, if we emphasize little the old familiar notes of Calvary, of hell, of sin, and take up the merely tender note of humanitarian philosophy, we sound our death knell, dig our grave, write our epitaph.

At Christ's Cross is the solution for our indebtedness problem, the sufficient stimulus for our lowered morale, the adequate replenishing for empty treasuries.

By prayer and heroic struggles our Southland has been consecrated beyond all power of priestly hands.

Our fathers whose flame burned steadily in wildest winds, passed through perils, making fiery stakes, whipping posts, prison bars, to blossom like Aaron's rod.

Shall we, with such ancestry blessed, hand down our blood-bequeathed legacies reduced in quality and in quantity?

Pigmies be where our fathers were giants in mind and conscience?

Shall we make the superstructure less than the foundations they laid?

Shall we let rot in ignoble anchorage the ships whose keels they laid and set with ribs of steel?

Our Baptist fathers, fearing not the wrath of man in the consciousness of God's presence, believing that all people have a right to approach God without any ecclesiastical or State interference, wrote history in blood before they wrote it in ink.

Shall we write history in ink only?

As Baptists, we believe, as did our fathers, in the rights of the individual, not ecclesiastical rights; in personal faith, not proxy faith; in the priesthood of all believers, not the priesthood of a class; in free grace, not sacramental grace; in the direct approach to God, not the indirect; in believer's baptism, not infant baptism; in the voluntary principle in religion, not the coercive.

And we must, without apology, without fear, without ceasing, preach and practice our beliefs, carrying them out to the point of suffering.

Down all highways, down all bypaths, we must shout the truth that in religion we have no priest but Christ, in sin no sacrifice but Calvary, in all things no authority but the Bible, and—always, everywhere—no confessional but the throne of grace!

Believing all this, shall we claim fellowship with and give obedient ear to men who, bearing the university brand, claiming the authority of a self-elected scholarship, substitute a "Thus saith the mind of man" for a "Thus said the Lord"—men who see no virgin birth in Bethlehem, men who read no deeper meaning in the Cross than heroic martyrdom, men who cannot find in Joseph's garden an empty tomb? God forbid.

The world speaks in desperate need to us.

Guilty we shall be of giving it a scorpion when it asks an egg, a serpent when it needs fish, if we point it not to Calvary.

Our one hope, in all things, is to deal with the tragic terms of the Cross, whereby callous hearts warm in gratitude to him who came to earth, enduring the indifference which drove him to the manger and the malice which nailed him to the Cross.

But what hope have we if, singing "Onward Christian Soldiers" we go through perfunctory services, parroting prayers, yawning over watches, acting as excursionists on a pleasure expedition?

What hope have we if gracious ladies and cultured men thank us for our sermons but do not surrender their souls to the will of God—open not their purses to the cause of Christ, while our institutions languish and our mission lines are near the breaking point?

What hope if, absorbed in the delights of scholarship, we let the fires go out on evangelistic altars?

What hope if, citizens of a civilization that makes ice in the tropics, we know not how, by the Cross, to attack frigid conventionalities with holy, spiritual impetuosity?

Or—if, adding telescopes to our eyes, viewing landscapes millions of miles away, we get in scientific fog banks and lose sight of Christ?

Or—if, adding radios to our ears, hearing whispers from all corners of the universe, we have dull ears, or deaf ears, or disobedient ears to the voice of him who "soundeth forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat"?

Or—if, installing and listening to big pipe organs in great church buildings, we miss life's central melody and become victims of dawdling ditties.

Or—if, adding the telephone to our tongues, talking across continents, expediting business, bringing friends within sound of our voice, we preach a cultural, not a crucified Christ?

Or—if, building big buildings, we forget that "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (II Cor. 3:11)?

Or—if, adding the telegraph to our fingers, writing around the world, we are inefficient and blundering in writing the literature of godliness upon the fleshly tablets of human hearts?

Or—if, adding the airplane to our bodies, flying swifter and mounting higher than eagles, we are slow in service to God to "mount up with wings as eagles"?

Or—if, adding the auto to our feet, we follow after Christ limpingly and complainingly, taking his name on in an easy fashion with loud professions and feeble possessions, afraid to walk in lockstep with him who "plants his footsteps upon the seas and rides upon the storm," who is "trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored"?

Or—if, following the violet road of the X-ray, studying the marrow in the bones of living men, we miss the secret of the Lord?

Or—if, compressing a Caruso into the microscopic point of a needle, hearing dead men sing, we fail to sing the white song of purity into the souls of our youth?

When the Roman General Pompey, was warned against the danger of his return from Egypt to Italy, he said:

> "It is a small matter that I should move forward and *die*, it is too great a matter that I should take one step backward and *live*."

It was said of Napoleon: "He never lost sight of his way onward in the dazzle and uproar of present circumstances." He was never blinded by the glare of victory or by the cloud of defeat.

So let it be with us—in thought, in word, in deed.

As soldiers of the Cross, no right have we to take one step backward—no right to make today's encampment the place of permament habitation.

No victory have we won with which we have a right for a moment to be content.

No defeat that ever disheartened us ought permanently to discourage us.

No army of occupation we.

An army of conquest.

At the Cross, standing there beside the gift of his whole life for us, can we stand unmoved?

At the Cross, seeing him who knew no sin bleeding his sweet life away for sinners, can we hug our lives close, withholding ourselves from the altar and, when the bugles of duty call, from the arena!

"He died for all!"

Why?

The answer is, "that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again!"

"Rose again!"

Consider those two words—and the realities to which they point.

"*Rose again!*"

Follow, follow now, while we consider the house of many wonders to which these two words are the key.

CHAPTER VI

COMPLEMENT

"He was buried!"—I Cor. 15:4.
"He rose again!"—I Cor. 15:4.

THERE came a day, a dread day, when the sun went down at noonday behind a blood-splotched wooden cross on the hill that was, in shape, like a skull.

And all, remembering how the black night came on at midday, said, "He is dead!"

The callous Roman soldiers, gamblers at the foot of the cross, they who nailed his quivering hands and pain-jerked feet to the Cross, they whose intellects and thoughts were as torpid as the rusty waters of a sluggish stream, said, "He is dead!"

The curious crowds, stupidly unconscious of the eternal value of things, said, "He is dead!"

Poltroonic Pilate, who had had his chance to befriend him, who had allowed his own interest to get the better of his conscience, who had chosen the friendship of Cæsar and spurned the friendship of the King Eternal, calling unto him the centurion and asking him if Jesus had been any while dead (Mark 16:44), said, "He's dead."

The smug elders whose hypocrisy he had condemned, said, with glee, "He's dead."

The centurion who supervised the bloody butchery

and who heard his last cry, said, having glorified God (Luke 23:47) in so saying, "Truly this was the Son of God" (Matt. 27:54), "He's dead."

The Sadducees, ignoring the supernatural, rejecting a divine hope to the travail of the ages, said, their callous hearts untouched by his agonies, "He's dead."

The crowd who passed by and reviled him, wagging their jesting heads in his dying agony (Matt. 27:39), said, with ribald jesting, "He's dead."

The prating and precise Pharisees, with gloating gladness, with triumphant tones, said, "He's dead."

Mary standing by the cross, the prophetic sword of Simeon piercing her heart, said, her crushed heart revealing itself only in part through her weeping eyes, "He's dead."

Caiaphas, whose envy had made him blind, said, "He's dead."

"And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned"—these said, "He's dead" (Luke 23:48).

"And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off beholding these things"—these, too, said, "He's dead" (Luke 23:49).

All said, "He's dead."

His disciples, in despair, saw the fire of life fade from the eyes that had looked with such tender compassion upon the multitudes.

Disappointed in themselves, disappointed in him, they saw the hands once placed with healing upon diseased bodies, the feet once swift on errands of mercy, the

mouth that had spoken as never man spake, go dead under the nails—the ears so keenly sensitized to cries of human need grow deaf in death.

As the sun went down at noonday behind the skull-shaped hill, they all, stupefied with a grief from which they could see no possible deliverance, said, "He's dead!"

Him who is to history's best character as light to darkness, as blessing to cursing, as a lily to a thistle, as snow to soot, as heaven to earth, as holiness to sin, as life to death, they named a dead man.

Joseph of Arimathea, a good man, a rich man, a disciple of Jesus secretly for fear of the Jews, an honorable counsellor, with the help of Nicodemus, took that body, stamped and scarred with the stigmata of the cross, and put it in the tomb in Joseph's garden where, for the first time in thirty-three years, the cruel world left him alone.

"And after this Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.

And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.

Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid." (John 19:38-41.)

"And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid." (Luke 23:55.)

Then in upper rooms, in dark retreats, in secret hiding places, behind locked doors, on lonely roads, his followers, in fear, said, "We hoped it was he who would have redeemed Israel" (Luke 24:21).

Hearing terrors very near in every sound, seeing lurking foes in every shadow, startled at the sound of every unfamiliar voice, they found their mental geography radically changed.

A huge chasm—a chasm vast, abysmal, dark, deep—yawned between them and their fondest hopes.

The throne of their beloved had disappeared in a tomb.

His kingdom had shrunk to the narrow dimensions of a grave.

His regal robes were now a shroud.

His only scepter—a weed, with which they smote him on the head (Matt. 27:30).

His only crown—a crown of thorns.

His only coronation acclaim, the spit they flung through sneering lips, their contempt materialized into a liquid.

His only throne—a blood-splotched cross.

His only emblems of royal insignia—the marks of the scourge upon his naked back.

His only glory—shame.

His only inaugural speech—a lonely cry!

His only coronation companions—two thieves.

His only reign—six hours of torture on the bloody tree.

His only coronation splendor—the black darkness that shrouded the world.

His only king's cup—a sponge filled with vinegar and gall.

His only authority the failure to come down from the cross.

They did not *say* that—they *thought* it.

Dead!

And buried!

Dark, bleak, comfortless that night. No balm in it for their torn spirits. No star of hope for their broken hearts. To them—dumb, stunned, bleeding under Golgotha's horrors—it was the last word, the final scene, a horror of disaster, a horror of defeat.

Death, whose only flowers are faded garlands on coffin lids, had trampled into lifeless dust the Rose of Sharon.

Death, whose only music is the sob of broken hearts, had padlocked the mouth that so comfortingly had spoken to the sad.

Death, whose only palace is a huge sepulcher, numbered him among his victims.

Death, whose only light is the darkness of the tomb, had quenched the Light of the world.

Death, whose only pleasure fountains are their falling tears of the world, had closed the eyes of him who wept over Jerusalem.

Death, whose only gold is the grave's dust had made his body a banquet for worms.

Death, with skeleton hand, had written "Ichabod" on all his claims.

Dead!

And—"he was buried."

And out yonder, somewhere, old Bartimæus' eyes

went blind again—blind with tears—as he knew that the one who gave him sight was dead.

In the home of Zaccheus, in Jericho, was a black shadow, a shadow not cast by night, as they thought on him who had changed that home into a bower of delight —now dead.

And, in Nain, there were heavy hearts thinking of him as dead who, one day not so long ago, broke up the funeral procession and returned to his home the captive of death, the widow's son, while a grave listened in vain for the coming of the mourners' steps.

And over yonder a certain man whom Jesus found at the pool of Bethesda was weighted down with sorrow, heavier than the helplessness that for thirty-eight years weighted down his body, as he thought of him who took away his infirmity, being dead.

Sad were many.

Sad was Jairus thinking of him now dead who had taken his little daughter back from the point of death.

Sad the man whose withered hand Jesus had healed, thinking of him whose hands were covered in the shroud.

Sad the deaf he had cured hearing of Jesus whose ears, in death, could hear no cry.

Sad the dumb he had healed speaking of him—now killed—who unloosed their tongues and put sweet songs in their mouths.

Sad the woman once in adultery taken! And the woman in Sychar, remembering the gracious dealing of him now dead.

And sad the lepers, once victims of a terrible disease, when they knew that he who made them for the embrace of loved ones was dead.

And, in Bethany, the sun had been plucked from the sky for Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. Jesus who robbed the grave for them was dead.

And—who knows?—away out yonder in the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, a Canaanitish woman, when she heard it, wept, recalling the happy day when the now-dead Jesus healed her daughter.

And also—somewhere—no doubt—the Gadarene demoniac, could not be comforted thinking of him as dead.

Dead.

And—buried!

But there came a day when he resumed his power, recovered his challenged rights, regained his waning influence, reasserted his sacred grandeur.

In the midst of his malignant enemies he arose, confounding their counsels, thwarting their efforts, laughing to scorn their malice.

And, answering them thus, he sent down the ages the blest assurance that the grave is not our goal.

The resurrection of Jesus, the whole alphabet of human hope, the certificate of our Lord's mission from heaven, is the heart of the gospel in all ages.

His victory over death is the best established fact in human history.

Yes.

But a Roman cross is gesture against sin unless his

tomb is empty—unless Jesus burst the bars of the grave, unless he spurned the sepulcher wherein human hands laid him.

"If Christ be not risen then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain" (I Cor. 15:14).

"If Christ be not risen, . . . ye are yet in your sins" (I Cor. 15:14).

Upon his resurrection the apostles foundationed their message and mission, building all their hope and proclamation around his claimed and attested deity.

In this complement of his crucifixion—this acceptance of his perfect sacrifice—the divinely-chosen witnesses saw that the Christ who seemed to have lost himself on Calvary found himself in the exit from Joseph's tomb—the opposite of all that his crucifiers intended when they drove the nails.

Christ's Cross, purposed from all eternity, prophesied through ages, peered into by angels, found its complement in the empty tomb where "the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door and sat upon it, his countenance like lightning, his raiment white as snow" (Matt. 28: 2-3).

The Saviour's sacrifice whereby his sin-made soul became the means to save from sin, his sore-parched lips the means to slake our thirst, his thorn-crowned brow the means to free from curse, his suffering soul the means to save unto the uttermost, found its complement in the empty tomb where Jesus wrested from Death's brow his black diadem.

The Saviour's suffering, whereby his nail-pierced hands

became the means to give release, his spear-opened side the means to enter bliss, his cross-bound feet the means to tread God's courts, his gall-stained mouth the means to father's kiss, found its complement in the empty tomb where Jesus wrenched from Death's hand Death's cruel scepter.

The atoning death, whereby his cord-scarred back became the means to heal the soul, his spit-marred face the means to saving grace, his hair-plucked cheeks the means to kindliness, his hand-smote form the means to God's embrace, found its ripened fruitage in the empty tomb where Jesus shivered at a single blow Death's empire of skulls and skeletons.

The vicarious death of Jesus on Calvary whereby his agony is the means of joy of heart, his sweat of blood the means of gift of rest, his hell of pain the means of Heaven's home, his naked form the means to clothing best, found its complement in the empty tomb where Jesus changed humanity's bleak winter into flowery summer.

His agony on the Cross, whereby his cry of thirst became the means to quench hell's fires, his darkness felt the means to endless light, his cup of woe the means to cup of joy, his sword-struck heart the means to eternal glory, found its complement in the cross where Jesus took away the hideous skeleton and left the radiant lily.

The Cross whereon and whereby his bruised heel became the means of Satan's doom, his awful death the means to banish death, his holy blood the means to enter into the holiest (Heb. 10:19), his given life the

means to eternal life, found its complement in the empty tomb where Jesus brought life and immortality to light (II Tim. 1:10).

His death on Calvary whereby his smarting stripes became the means of healing full, his wounding sore the means of sins forgiven, his chastening hard the means of peace with God, his stricken soul the means of blessing abundant, found its complement in the garden of Joseph of Arimathea where he "tore the bars away" —where he "arose a victor from the dark domain," where "up from the grave he arose with a mighty triumph over his foes."

No risen Christ, a tomb as worthless as any tomb—a cross no more than a martyr's cross.

No risen Christ, death a king of terror with no rival, a black shadow which no sun ever penetrates.

No risen Christ, no trumpet to sound through death's dreary dominions to awake the dead from eternal sleep.

No risen Christ, death mocks our hopes like a coarse comedian or a heartless satirist.

No risen Christ, death, inexorable jailer, imprisons us in the iron slumber of eternal night.

No risen Christ, the whole history of Christianity and its existence is unintelligible.

No risen Christ, no seeing again the faces of our redeemed dead, dear, sweet faces which we have "loved long since and lost awhile!"

And "they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished" (I Cor. 15:18).

No risen Christ, the whole earth in deepest mourning

dressed, will, like Rachel of old, go down to the judgment weeping for her children, finding no comfort.

"Christ died for our sins"

"He was *buried!*"

"He *rose* again the third day!"

Yes! He arose—the first sheaf of the resurrection harvest, "the first fruits of them that sleep."

So! Christ is our contemporary.

To this sweet truth we address ourselves in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VII

CONTEMPORARY

"He ever liveth to make intercession for us." (Heb. 7:25.)

"But as for me I know that my Redeemer liveth." (Job 19:25.)

"And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks *one like unto the Son of man*, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire;

And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shining in his strength.

And when I saw him, I fell at his feet dead. And he lāid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forever more, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." (Rev. 1:14-18.)

"They went forth and preached everywhere, *the Lord working with them*, and confirming the word with signs following." (Mark 16:20.)

"All power is *given unto me in heaven and in earth;* Go ye therefore . . . and, lo, *I am with you alway.*" (Matt. 28:18-20.)

"The apostles whom he had chosen, to whom *he showed himself alive* after his passion by many infallible proofs, being

seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." (Acts 1:2-3.)

"*Whom God hath raised up*, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." (Acts 2:24.)

These are just a few statements which we have chosen from the many statements in God's Word—statements that prove to us that we have, not a dead Christ, but a risen Christ as our omnipotent, omniscient, contemporary. And each statement is sufficient to fasten this truth immovably and irrevocably into our hearts. And all that these words express is contained in the words, "He was buried and rose again the third day according to the scriptures."

To know *only one* of these statements, to know *any* one of these statements, is to know that we have a living Christ who is our contemporary—our contemporary if we journey to poles undiscovered, our contemporary if we voyage over uncharted oceans illimitable, our contemporary if we plod through trackless forests and impenetrable jungles, our contemporary if we trudge across pathless plains and endless snows.

Our omnipotent contemporary he—to the very last inch of the very last yard of the very last mile of life's way.

Our omniscient contemporary he—to the very last minute of the very last hour of the very last day of all the years.

That is what he meant when he said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the

Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:18-20).

Say it over and over:

"I am he that *liveth* and *was* dead; and, behold, I am *alive* forevermore, Amen."

Jesus, born in denial of the laws of life, raised from the dead in defiance of the laws of death—our living Christ.

A living Christ—no mere shadow Christ of legend and myth.

A living Christ—no hypothetical Christ of sentimental conjuring.

A living Christ—no immanent Christ of nature.

A living Christ—no pale Christ of historical imagination.

A living Christ—no mere dream Christ of culture and romance.

Our contemporary Christ—no mere heroic Christ of the poet's song.

Our contemporary Christ—no fading artistic Christ of the painter's brush.

Our contemporary Christ—no cold marble Christ of the sculptor's chisel.

Our contemporary Christ—no ivory Christ on a crucifix, giving an expression of the worship of defeat.

Our contemporary Christ—no mere spectator Christ, no longer able to say, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

Our contemporary Christ—no dead-figure Christ protected by a creedal sarcophagus.

Our contemporary Christ—no invalid Christ asking of man more than he is able to give to man.

A living Christ—no mere eulogized Christ of the orator's rhetoric.

A living Christ—no radiant apparition Christ of yesterday.

A living Christ—no vanished Christ canonized by the historian's pen.

A living Christ—no coffined Christ of the embalmer's art.

No Christ remote.

No Christ inaccessible, no longer active in the world.

No such Christ will answer our needs.

But our Christ is a mightily-acting Christ—the eternal contemporary of humanity, the old Leader on all new roads—offering his abundant efficiency to our poor inadequacy.

This contemporary Christ, using men as channels through which he himself spoke, channels through which his power became articulate, enabled the first Christians to change the face of the world.

Through him, their compassionate contemporary, they emptied the temples of Athens, put out the altar fires of Diana, conquered the iron arm of Rome, lit a lamp in the palace of Cæsar and set the banner of the Cross over a wider territory than the Roman eagles shadowed.

Whenever and wherever hostilities confronted them, whenever and wherever tyranny exulted in sheer brutal-

ity, their courage rose with danger and their zeal, as fires fanned by tempest winds, increased and made their day one of shining exploits, eclipsing the dread shocks of the world by noble sacrifices, serenity, joy.

But in this clever, erotic, agitated day, let us not give way to the mischievous suggestion that such achievements are curiosities of antiquated religious experience —that certain things happened long ago which are impossible now.

God, who was in Christ (II Cor. 5:19) did not die when Stephen was stoned, when Paul was beheaded.

God, the brightness of his glory being Jesus, did not cease to be when the blood of Latimer and Cranmer simmered in the fire.

God, the express image of his person being Jesus, did not grow dumb in death after the days of Luther, of Cromwell, of Wycliff.

God, upholding all things by the word of his power through Jesus, did not "give up the ghost" when Carey and Judson gave up their labors in foreign lands under the chill climate born of death's icy breath.

God, "who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the world" (Heb. 1:1-2), did not cease to speak when the eloquent tongue of Spurgeon, when the earnest tongue of Moody, when the flaming tongue of Whitefield, when the entrancing tongue of Talmadge lay silent in the grave. From everlasting to everlasting is he.

God, making the worlds by Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:2),

did not die when Broadus, when Carroll, when Graves, when Gambrell, when Willingham died.

As Poling prettily and potently puts it:

"No dead king lit the signal fires of the Pentecostal upper room.

"No dead king held the gaze of Stephen, when, through the showering stones, the first Christian martyr lifted his dying eyes to the opening heavens and claimed forgiveness for his murderers.

"No dead king took command of Saul of Tarsus, blinded him with lightnings and thrust him forth to compass the earth with the truths of redemption.

"No dead king made out of the heathen Coliseum a Christian church.

"No dead king tamed the fires of Savonarola, led the Ironsides of Cromwell, eased the waves that washed the decks of the 'Mayflower,' calmed the seas that broke about the prow of the 'Half-Moon,' and gave to the first missionaries the 'islands of the sea for an inheritance!'"

No. No dead king led the scholarly William Screven, driven out of New England by persecution, to establish the first Baptist church in the South in Charleston in 1683.

No dead king enabled William Carey to land in Calcutta on November 11th, 1793 (the very day the French Revolutionists tore the Cross from Notre Dame, smashed it in the streets, and abjured Christianity) and to claim a new continent for Christ.

No dead king inspired the great John A. Broadus, once as penniless as the Seminary was poor, to turn

deaf ears to a call that paid fabulously more, to fasten his flag to the mast of what seemed to some to be a sinking Seminary ship.

No dead king gave John Anderson, a great heart of the South, courage to choose a mud grave in a Chinese river rather than the comforts of a life of ease.

Not dead!

No. Wesley, Carey, Moffett, Morrison, Livingstone, Adoniram Judson, and that numberless company of their faith who went forth to make the waste places of idolatry blossom with the flowers of salvation, followed not the banner of a dead king, but marched in the train of a living Christ!

Christ is among us now to make the power of God usable to the neediest among us—to "bring every mountain and hill low, to exalt the valleys, to make the crooked places straight and the rough places plain."

The answer to Elijah's question, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?", is the parted Jordan, giving evidence that, though his servants be translated, God liveth—the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb. 13:8).

Not Christ crucified and risen as an airy abstraction, but as an omnipotent help and sympathy, too near to be missed, too certain to be doubted, is the Christ we have as our contemporary.

Surely, because of all these truths, a joy, ever rich and abiding, ever strengthening and never weakening, ever fascinating and never wearisome, shall fill our hearts when, going forth to the tasks of the kingdom, we know that he whom the grave could not hold is

living—living, not shorn of his power, but, by all power in heaven and earth given unto him (Matt. 28:18), mighty to honor faith with fellowship and power, mighty to save (Isa. 63:1), mighty to prompt in every perplexity, mighty to help in every hazard, mighty to guide in every gloom.

Alive, linking the exploits of the fathers to the achievements of the children.

Alive, giving us, amid the snarling clamors of the day, voices that will not die away in error and incompetence.

Alive to the end of unending eternity—acknowledging no mastery in hostile circumstances.

Alive, offering the inexhaustible fountains of his strength.

Alive, keeping pace with the most unexpected challenges.

Alive, able, willing, mighty to help—our eternal contemporary.

Alive, making the impenetrable walls of life and death magnificent apertures.

Alive, changing bleak limitation into immeasurable expanse.

Alive, transforming human deserts—dry, infertile, flowerless, treeless, songless—into gardens of the Lord, through which silver waters flow, wherein heavenly songsters sing, and wherein green things and fragrant flowers and ripened fruits flourish through all seasons and in all weathers.

Alive, freshening and vitalizing the hidden mysteries of our own beings, enabling us to become the head-

waters of benediction to others—making it so that our inner brook shall break into flowing rivers and our flowing rivers shall widen into spiritual seas of "living water" (John 4:14).

Years, passing swiftly and beyond recall into the tomb of Time, find him ever with us.

Centuries do not leave him behind.

Knowing the worth of men centuries ago, using them as channels through which the divine became articulate, he made out of crude fishermen, with no social prestige, no political pull, no purses, brave knights who challenged kings—brave ambassadors who carried the gospel to the uttermost frontiers of heathendom—valiant soldiers of the Cross who marched as to a wedding to face the menace of death.

So can he do with us today, saving us from all troubles—from self-satisfied religious mediocrity.

So can he do with us, keeping us from lolling and lounging when the bugles of duty call, as we face evils that would lead our greatest graces to the grave and leave the world no copy!

So can he do with us, leading us forth by the right way, giving us strength to walk forth to larger ambitions, and to mightier achievements—to array ourselves in more vigorous realities.

He can keep us from making our religion a sentimentality, a kindly emotion.

He can keep us from the tragedy of having impressions but no convictions, of having sensibilities but no mighty experiences. Shall we let him?

Dwelling no more with our losses, our griefs—shall we let him?

Responding sacrificially and heroically to the marching orders of his kingdom's great advance—shall we let him?

Putting relentless hands down into our hearts and tearing out by the roots everything that will not advance our Redeemer's cause—shall we let him?

Taking counsel no more of our fears—shall we let him?

Asking immunity no more from kingdom arenas where the fighting is fiercest and the blood flows freest —shall we let him?

Acting so that each tomorrow finds us farther than today—shall we let him?

Counting all things but loss that we may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his suffering (Phil. 3:10), rejoicing that we are counted worthy to suffer for him—shall we let him?

Living no more on the fringes, content no more to toss about in the offing, that his way may be known upon the earth, his saving health among all nations—shall we let him?

Speaking the truth that holds the world together, supports the stars and guides the tides—shall we let him?

Speaking and living the truth that stops at the door of the humble to comfort the weary and the mourning—shall we let him?

Making known abroad the love that stoops to lift up the fallen—shall we let him?

Looking up to that bloody cross where God dealt with him as he must *deal with* sin, in severe and unrelenting judgment—where he died for our sins, becoming for us all that God *must* judge that we through faith in him might become all that God cannot judge—shall we let him?

Looking down into the empty tomb where we have the assurance that the resurrection trumpet shall find us and we shall live, no matter by what dissolution scattered—shall we let him?

Faithful all, and faithful unto bleeding, while our heavenward call is the spiritual melody of our earthward walk—shall we let him?

Faithful all and faithful daily until the vanishing goals of time give place to the many mansions of the Father's house—shall we let him?

Faithful all and faithful unto death until the fountain of human tears has emptied its last bitter drop into the silver river of divine joy—shall we let him?

By the great end for which God made us, by the high honor of his trust in us, let us take up the tasks our bravest hopes once fixed upon. By the shame that will cover us at his appearing if we fail him, by the glory and sure reunions of that day when the resurrection trumpet shall sound with resonant thunder throughout death's vast empire, let us, in Christ's name close with our opportunity with all our souls!

By the remorse we shall one day feel if we, "being armed and carrying bows turn back in the day of battle," let us put out the fires of every unworthy rest camp and rise and go—never forgetting that he who

died for our sins and rose again according to the Scriptures, rises to go before us, our eternal contemporary, in a leadership that sets the pace and shares the dangers —in a leadership that is companionship as well as leadership.

Once, by invitation of a friend, I attended a big football game. They told me that seventy thousand folks were there. I did not count them. But if I am ever as sure of having $70,000 as I am that the seventy thousand people were there, then a fortune is mine—sometime. Moreover, all, young and old, were eager, expectant, excited.

On both sides of the huge bowl were four flaring brass bands, with every fife screaming, with every trumpet in full blast, with every cornet sounding loudly forth, with every saxophone gutturally whining, with every big horn bellowing forth a bass, with every drum moaning its unmuffled noise, with every flute cajolingly uttering its voice. The cheer leaders from both universities were cutting capers in front of the student sections and calling to their hosts of "rooters" to loud cheers through raucous megaphones, while the cheer hosts responded in full lung. What with the flying ribbons and colors, what with the bands all aflare, what with rumble of voices in conversation, a jovial, hysterical tempest seemed to be raging in that huge bowl!

When the game started and the seventy thousand folks who witnessed the spectacle, waving flaming colors and pennants, singing madly, shouting excitedly, screaming wildly, roaring in elation or disappointment, as the battle waged, now in favor of one team, now of the

other, I recalled a tornado I had once seen and heard. I could imagine myself seeing a volcano in eruption, throwing forth gaudy blossoms in profusion as I watched that madly shouting crowd throw hats and pennants in the air, waving ribbons all the while. An earthquake seemed to be rumbling and growling throughout that vast arena.

And, all during the game, the football, which the forty-four eyes of the alert players in the stadium followed and upon which 140,000 eyes from the grandstands were fixed, went back and forth, to and fro, hither and yon—sometimes kicked by skilled toe, sometimes carried by strong arms behind trained interference, sometimes thrown the forward pass route by muscular arm. And, till the very last minute of play, that vast throng, the strong voices of youth, and the quivering voices of old age mingling in one riotous clamor, seemed never to weary with their cheers.

And I, from my seat high up on the last row, watched the eleven fellows, now the eleven fellows on one team, now the eleven fellows on the other team, carrying that ball toward the goal.

To what were they listening?

To the clamorous urge of the brass bands? No.

To the wild surge of cheering hosts? No.

To the roar of thousands of voices? No.

To the call of cheer leaders? No.

I noticed the little lithe quarterback on each team, as the ball was in his possession, as he called his signals, as the throngs watched to see what play was coming.

"Twenty-nine, forty-two, eighty-three, hike" that quarterback would call. Or, "Sixteen, twenty-two, thirty-three, on!" And, as the ball was put into play, we all got evidence, thrilling evidence, that these eleven husky men were giving ear to and obedience to one voice—*to just one voice*. Yes, to the voice of the quarterback, given authority to run that team, their ears were keenly sensitized.

Today, amid the snarling clamors of the day, world voices east, world voices west, world voices north, world voices south, call to us—to *all* of us, to *each* of us.

And the voice of Jesus calls us amid the babbling clamors of those who "loose wild tongues that hold not God in awe."

Let it be his voice to which we shall give ear—his voice to which we shall yield glad obedience.

The same forgiving voice that to the sinful woman said, "Go and sin no more," calls to us.

The same sweet voice that said to the daughter of Jairus, "Damsel arise," calls to us.

The same authoritative voice that said to dead Lazarus, "Come forth," calls us here.

The same wise voice that said to Nicodemus "Ye must be born again," calls us now.

The same calm voice that said to the storm, "Peace be still," calls us to follow him.

The same loving voice that said to the dying thief, "Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise," calls persistently.

The same rebuking voice that said to the hypocrites, "How shall ye escape the damnation of hell?" calls us to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

The same prayerful voice that said "Sanctify them by thy truth" calls us to be obedient unto the heavenly vision, And it is the voice of our contemporary Christ who said, "I am with you always even to the end of the world!"

CHAPTER VIII

CONSUMMATION

"He rose again the third day according to the scriptures." —I Cor. 15:4.

"Because I live, ye shall live also."—John 14:19.

"I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."—John 11:25-26.

"I am he that liveth, and was dead: and, behold, I am alive forever more, Amen: and have the keys of hell and of death." —Rev. 1:18.

"According to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."—II Tim. 1:9-10.

In these words—and many other words—our contemporary Christ has made us a promise which brings before us and plants in our hearts, as one plants fadeless flowers in a garden, redemption's grand consummation.

Our bodies may be dead for centuries. But, by God's resurrection remedy, which is as universal as the disease, our bodies shall rise.

They shall rise, though the brier hedges of America or the cactus rows of Mexico, or the thorn thickets of Russia grow in barricades over our graves.

They shall rise, though the icy fingers of the North weave over our graves continental quilts of thick ice.

These earthly bodies shall be raised with all their imperfections removed, though hills of desert sands, exceeding the weight of mountains, bury them deep.

Yes, these bodies, no longer mortal, shall rise, though oceanic mud imprison them under a thousand tumbling seas.

These bodies, no longer subject to disease, shall rise, though the pick of grave-digger and the spade of sexton and the chisel of tombstone-maker weight us down with ten thousand tons of wet clay, or with the cold marble of a thousand quarries.

These bodies, no longer subject to death, shall rise, though skyscrapers that look like illuminated cliffs at night crush our last resting place.

Our bodies, glorified and incorruptible, shall rise, though the plowman tear to shreds our burial couch of clay.

Our bodies, forever free from the physical defects handed down for thousands of years, shall rise, though corals build continents upon our bones.

Our bodies, no longer inheriting all the bodily infelicities of the past, shall rise, though cannon blast our bodies to bits or the sword chop them to pieces, or poison gas shrivel them in promiscuous ditches of battlefields.

Our bodies, their glorious restoration effected in the twinkling of an eye, shall rise, though recesses of ocean depths hold them in caverns deep and cold.

Our bodies shall rise with their perfected eyes out of

which has been washed the last trace of tears, though wrapped heavily for centuries in the icy shroud of glaciers.

Our bodies shall rise with their perfected hands, with all the knots of toil untied and all the scars of toil removed, though mountains of rock cover them.

Our bodies, the shoulders thereof bent no more with burden bearing and the weight of years, shall rise, though the storm's lightning burn them to cinders.

Our bodies, their perfected form wasted no more by disease and the blight of sin, shall come forth in glorious beauty, though once fed to famished lions or boiled in caldrons for the cannibal's feast.

Our bodies, no more to be twisted by rheumatism, no more to be burned by fever fires, shall be restored to unblemished perfection on that resurrection morning, though once digested in the maw of shark.

Our bodies, tortured never again by pain, handicapped never again by crippled limbs and blind eyes and dumb tongues and deaf ears, shall greet the resurrection day pulsing with life that shall endless be, though ground to powder by jaws of wild beasts.

Our bodies, no furrowed brows and hollow cheeks and wrinkled skins and swollen joints to mar their beauty, shall tireless bodies be, pure bodies be, glorious bodies be, immortal bodies be—on that glorious day.

Our bodies, though instruments now of sin, though victims now of death, shall, on that day, be raised in his own sacred image—"fashioned like unto his own glorious body" (Phil. 3:22).

Our bodies which, sown in corruption, have become

the meat of worms and debris of clay, or the foul ashes of decay, shall be raised in incorruption.

It shall be as a tattered and moth-eaten garment, once rent to shreds and turned to rags, restored in a moment of divine power to its perfection and adorned with costly fringes and embroideries unknown and unpossessed before by mortal flesh.

No matter what dissolution may scatter us, we are marked by the Holy Spirit for identification at the resurrection.

"It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body" (I Cor. 15:44).

"This corruptible must put on incorruption" (I Cor. 15:53).

"This mortal must put on immortality" (I Cor. 15:53).

"The Lord shall change our vile body" (Phil. 3:21).

"All that are in their graves shall come forth" (John 5:28-29).

Some from the mountain peaks where they died alone and without burial.

Some from the tombs of the famous.

Some from obscure corners where sleeps "some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood."

Some from the mud sepulchers of the ocean's depths.

Some from huge marble vaults with ornate epitaphs.

Some from unmarked graves, where rests some "mute, inglorious Milton."

God's power is pledged for this resurrection truth and resurrection triumph—pledged for this marvelous and mysterious consummation of redemption.

His power, the Power which holds the world in the hand of his omnipotence and beneath the eye of his omniscience.

The Lord's power, the Power which "sees the centuries glide like falling rain into the still pool of eternity."

The Almighty's power, the Power whose glory is seen in the heavens which he has mapped and in the dust on the moth's wing.

Jehovah's power, the Power which cares with equal ease for the fluctuations of the atoms and the perturbations of the solar system, which established the gravitation which rules the motes in the sunbeams and the mass of Jupiter.

The Creator's power, the Power which "measureth the waters in the hollow of his hand, comprehendeth the dust of the earth in a measure" (Isa. 40:12), girds himself with the robes of lightnings, splits the earth in twain with the earthquake's riving blow, pours out lava streams from the volcano's cone.

Yes, God's power, the Power which "turned the flint into a fountain of waters" (Psa. 114:8), "set the sun in his tabernacle in the heavens" (Psa. 19:4), and now "hurls the erratic comet to kindle fires on the black altars of night," and which bindeth the sweet influences of Pleiades and looseth the bands of Orion and bringeth forth Mazzaroth in his season and guideth Arcturus with his sons and knoweth the ordinances of heaven and hath set the dominion thereof in the earth (Job 38: 31-33), and still "doeth great things past finding out, yes, and wonders without number" (Job 9:10).

The power of the Lord God, the Power which "stretches the North over the empty place, hangeth the earth upon nothing," "bindeth up the waters in thick clouds," "lifts up mountains helmeted with ice in the tropics"—he hath promised a resurrection day.

More than rhetoric is the statement that, on that day, in the sea, "human bones will break away from their coral fastenings and mermaids, draped in dripping weeds, will mourn the evacuation of all their caves."

More than imagination is the thought that, on that day, the battlefields of the world will crowd the continents with revivified legions.

More than oratorical flight is the statement that, on that day, all around the world the trumpet of God shall sound through all of death's dreary dominions and, at its call, they that dwell in the dust shall awake and sing (Isa. 26:19) and "the earth shall cast out the dead" (Isa. 26:19).

Yes, a resurrection day hath been promised by him. Promised by him who divided the sea, and caused his people to pass through, and made the waters to stand as an heap (Psa. 78:13) and, in time of hunger, "rained flesh upon them as dust, and feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea" (Psa. 78:27), promised by him who, in time of thirst, "brought streams out of the rocks and caused waters to run down like rivers" (Psa. 78:16), promised by him who, "causeth the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth and maketh lightnings for the rain and bringeth the wind out of his treasuries" (Psa. 135:7), promised by him "who taketh pleasure in

his people and beautifieth the meek with salvation" (Psa. 149:4).

And not one of his promises *has* ever failed. Not one of his promises *can* ever fail. "It is impossible for God to lie" (Heb. 6:18).

This means victory, not defeat!

"He will swallow up death in victory" (Isa. 25:8).

"Death is yours" (I Cor. 3:22).

"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (I Cor. 15:54).

"Paint Christ, not dead, but risen!
With his foot set in scorn on the split rock
With which they sought to hold him down!
Paint him the Conqueror of death!
Paint him the Lord of life!
Paint him as what he is, the irresistible Victor, who, tested to the uttermost, has proved himself in very deed mighty to save!"

Death is not defeat for the soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose.

Was Henry Martin, that scholar of Oxford, that mathematician, the great brain of Oxford and Cambridge, who buried himself in the sands of Arabia for Jesus' sake, defeated? He went in territories that no other man had ever been in, and at last lay down on the desert sand; and they buried him in an unmarked grave. Was this great hero defeated? No—a thousand times. Put a stone at the head of his grave, and let

some angel artist come from glory and carve it with eternal letters. It is victory.

Was the greatest man who ever lived, next to Jesus Christ, defeated when they laid his head on Nero's block and cut it off?

You call it defeat when God Almighty puts a crown on a man's brow? It is victory to the last limit, and earth knows no victory like that.

The mission of Jesus meant life, but it is only found in him; and without him there is no victory in death.

"Why be afraid of death as though your life were Breath?
Death but anoints your eyes with clay. O glad surprise.

Why should you be forlorn? Death only husks the corn.
Why should you fear to meet the thresher of the wheat?

Is sleep a thing to dread? Yet, sleeping you are dead
Till you wake and rise, here, or beyond the skies.

Why should it be a wrench to leave your wooden bench,
Why not with happy shout run home when school is out?

The dear ones left behind? O foolish one and blind.
A day—and you will meet; a night—and you will greet.

This is the death of death, to breathe away a breath
And know the end of strife, and taste the deathless life!"

Death says: "The stars are out."

Immortality says: "The stars go down to rise upon some fairer shore"

Death says: "This is the end."

Immortality says: "This is the beginning."

Death says: "This is the soul's goal—dust."

Immortality says: "Dust thou art to dust returnest was not spoken of the soul."

Death says: "I have plucked your fairest flowers."

Immortality says: "They are but transplanted into bliss to adorn eternal bowers."

Death says: "This is permanent separation."

Immortality says: "They are only waiting in another place."

Death says: "This is eternal sleep."

Immortality says: "They shall wake to know the end of strife and taste the deathless life and joy without fear."

Death says: "To die is loss."

Immortality says: "To die is gain."

Death says: "This is defeat."

Immortality says: "This is victory."

Death says: "The torch is quenched."

Immortality says: "The torch shall be relit with all the brilliance of the sun."

Death says: "The column is broken."

Immortality says: "The column is transferred to another building and another city to be a pillar in the house of God!"

Death says: "The strings of the harp are snapped."

Immortality says: "The harp is not broken but handed to a truer minstrel who will bring out the rich compass of its hidden music."

Death is the putting off of a garment—the moving out of a tabernacle.

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life" (II Cor. 5:1-4).

"Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me" (II Peter 1:14).

Death is gain to the believer.

"For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor: yet what I shall choose I wot not.

For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Phil. 1:21-23).

The resurrection of Christ furnishes the grand, indisputable proof of our resurrection from the dead.

Christ's resurrection proves that immortality is a fact, for he has gone beyond the grave and has come back.

Eternally can he say, "I am he that *liveth,* and *was* dead, and, behold, I am *alive forevermore*" (Rev. 1:18).

"Our Saviour Jesus Christ hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (II Tim. 1:10).

By his resurrection he has hung, for us, for all, a lamp in the tomb—a lamp which has lighted forever its darkness and assuredly banished its gloom.

Through the broken tomb of Christ we may look out,

as through a window, and see beyond the dark river the bright and happy faces of the redeemed ones we miss from our earthly circles. And, "having the vision of life as immortal, find in the truth of immortality boundless inspiration, comfort for every sorrow, gain for every loss."

Accordingly, in glad chorus of confirmation, we all, in agreement with the great Apostle Peter, singing with exceeding great joy, say:

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations."—I Peter 1:3, 4, 5, 6.

CHAPTER IX

CONFIRMATION

"According to the scriptures."—I Cor. 15:3-4.

"ACCORDING to the scriptures!"

That is, we know that Christ died for our sins according to the Word of God, which forever is settled in heaven" (Psa. 119:89).

According to the scriptures—the Word of God—which men have hid in their hearts that they might not sin against the Almighty (Psa. 119:11).

According to the Bible—the Scriptures, so simple that a child may wade in its waters unafraid, so profound the mightiest intellects cannot go beyond its depths.

According to the Word of God, which keeps men from being ashamed when they have respect unto all its commandments (Psa. 119:6).

According to the Word of God, which is a "lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path" (Psa. 119:105).

According to the Word of God, which "giveth understanding unto the simple" (Psa. 119:130).

According to the Word of God, recording with equal dignity and wisdom the birth of babes, the flight of angels, the death of kings, the overthrow of empires, the fall of a sparrow.

According to the Word of God, a book by the side of which "the hexameters of Horace, the dramas of

Shakespeare, the imagination of Milton" are not to be compared.

According to the Word of God, which is truth, and which doth sanctify by its truth (John 17:17).

According to the Scriptures, which God has magnified above all his name (Psa. 138:2).

According to the Scriptures, the Scriptures supremely sanctioned by Christ himself, who accepted their unalterable doctrines concerning the creation of man, concerning righteousness, concerning God's purpose of grace through Israel.

According to the Scriptures, which Christ used to justify his mission and to illumine the mystery of his cross, the history of which he accepted as preparation for himself, disowning not one of its prophets, disclaiming not one of its statements, feeding his own soul with its contents, sustaining himself upon it as the living and sovereign and eternal Word of God.

According to the Bible—the Bible divine in spirit, for holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (II Peter 1:19-20).

According to the Bible, peculiar in its adaptations, for the Psalmist so testified in his prayer, "Order my steps in thy Word" (Psalm 119:133, 154).

According to the Bible, living in its nature, for it is that which causes us to be born from above, and makes us alive unto God (I Peter 1:23, 25).

According to the Bible—faith begetting in its ministry, for faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God (Rom. 10:17).

According to the Bible—searching in its discern-

ments, for it is the discerner of the thoughts and the intents of the heart (Heb. 4:12).

According to the Bible—reproductive in its molding, for it is a mold to shape our lives and conduct (Rom. 6:17).

According to the Bible—Christ-revealing in its witness, for it testifies of him (John 5:39).

The Christ of God you cannot understand apart from the Word of God.

The revelation of God you cannot understand unless you see the purpose of that revelation is to make known his Son, and thus make known himself.

Only as you see the Christ in the Word, do you begin to see the Word in all its grace.

It is as you see the living Word that you will understand the written Word. If you see the Christ in the Word you will never doubt for one moment that the written Word is indeed the Word of God, because of the Christ it reveals.

Destroy faith in the written Word, you destroy faith in the living Word. Take away from the authority of the written Word, you take away from the authority of the living Word. Minimize the written Word, you minimize the Christ. Minimize the written Word, and you will find that you have nothing left but an empty tomb—an empty tomb instead of a living Saviour!

"Christ is the Fact of facts, the Bible's theme,
Who stands alone, august, unique, supreme;
The Bread of Life, who meets the need of men,
Who comes to all, o'er field, and moor, and fen;
The Man of Pain, who feels all human pain,

And slakes the thirst, and turns all loss to gain.
He is the God, all light from him doth gleam,
He is the Man of men, beyond all dream;
He is the God of Love, all love Divine,
He is the Hand of Power, all strength sublime;
From him all things come forth, in him consist,
To him all tend, and all by him subsist;
The Book, it speaks of him, the Christ reveals,
The eyes that close to him, all truth conceals;
He is the Gospel's theme—he died for all,
His death alone can save from sin's enthral,
His resurrection life, the Might of might,
His reign within the soul, the life of right;
His peace within the heart, the calm of love;
His Joy untold, the thrill from realms above;
His love the fire that burns within the fane,
His promises the Word's refreshing rain;
The Spirit came, the outcome of his death,
The power of God, his grace and living breath!
He all! the visibility of God,
And so I sing of him and onward plod!"

"He died for our sins and rose again the third day" according to the Word of God—the Book which has been a pillow for many a dying head, the Book the apostles preached with arm of fire, the Book which martyrs declared with rattle of chain, the Book which has been preached in chapels, in hedges, in lanes, in country, in city—bringing great blessings.

According to the eternal Word which shall never pass away, though heaven and earth shall pass away (Matt. 5:18), though men burn and spurn and men try to tear it to shreds with their infidelity, their lexicons, their mathematics, their logic, philosophy, biology,

chemistry, spades, prehistoric bones, and all the rest—the Word deep as the foundations of eternal justice, high as the throne of the infinite, wide as the moral government of God, enduring as the life of the Almighty, exhaustless in its inspiration as the love of God.

Yes, "Christ died for our sins" according to the Book which is above and beyond all books as a river is beyond a rill in reach, as the sun is beyond a tallow dip in brightness, as a tree is beyond a twig in fruit-bearing, as the wings of an eagle are beyond the wings of a sparrow in strength, as Niagara is beyond a mud puddle in power and in glory.

According to the Scriptures—the Book that has withstood storms of fire!—Book against which tyranny has issued its edicts!—Books against which Mohammedanism has hurled its anathemas!—Book against which infidelity has thrown its sharpest shafts and strongest spears of scorn and ridicule!—Book which the dissecting knives of modernistic "intellectuals" have whacked at, like butchers, and do whack at now like savages on a midnight raid!—Book against which snipers from behind some pulpit stands and some college chairs have aimed their ill-grounded propositions—Book with enemies that have tried to batter it to pieces with their scientific hammers, to shackle it with their philosophic chains, to burn it with their fuming agnostic acids, to drown it in murky infidel ink, to bury it in the garbage of their atheistic potter's fields.

But withal, all its enemies have not torn one hole in its holy vesture nor stolen one flower from its wondrous garden nor diluted one drop of honey from its abun-

dant hive nor broken one string on its thousand-stringed harp nor drowned one sweet word in infidel ink nor made dim one ray of its perpetual light nor stayed its triumphant progress by so much as one step nor shortened its life by so much as one brief hour!

And, as Riley has pungently said, we don't believe that the Soviet leaders of Russia and their propagandists in China and in Europe and in America are likely to put out of commission the Sacred Book that conquered the intellect of a Cromwell, a Blackstone, a Selden, a Sir William Jones, a William Pitt, a Wilberforce, a Wright, an Earl Cairus, a Chief Justice Marshall, a Webster, an Abraham Lincoln, and a Gladstone.

This Book is still the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword! And more besides!

For the Bible yet will be the code of all nations, the arbiter of all questions, the referee of all disputes, the grand court of appeal for the world, and king over all.

And even now, having already been translated into eight hundred and eighty-six different languages and dialects, it travels more highways and walks more bypaths and knocks at more doors and speaks to more peoples in their mother tongue than any book the world has ever known.

From the 1930 report of the American Bible Society we learn this concerning the publication of the Scriptures:

The four Gospels for the first time have been published in the language spoken by the Kuskokwim Eskimos in southwestern Alaska. An edition of the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles appears in Benga for use

in West Africa. The four Gospels come forth in Hopi, the first of the Scriptures to be published for the Indians of that name living near the Grand Canyon. A "diglot" edition of the Gospel of St. John with Portuguese and Japanese in parallel columns is now ready for use among the Japanese immigrants now pouring into Brazil. So also are the Psalms in Bolivian Quechua for use among a large Indian population in the Andes.

The year 1929 saw the completion of the New Testament into Cakchiquel, a language spoken in Guatemala by an Indian tribe numbering about 200,000. The completion of this translation marked the climax of ten years of painstaking labor on the part of a faithful missionary and his wife.

The report states that the Bible in whole or in part has now been translated in *886 languages* chiefly due to the combined efforts of the Bible Societies of the world. Some portion of the Bible appears in a new language or dialect as often as once every five weeks. Among the new translations in process are:

Parts of the New Testament in the dialect of the Cheyenne Indians.

The translation of the Gospels into Mam, Quiche, and Valiente, the respective languages of three Indian tribes in Central America with a population of 460,000.

A fresh translation of the New Testament into the languages of the Quechua people of Peru.

And the four Gospels into the Aymara, spoken by some 500,000 Indians in Bolivia.

Among revisions being made are:

The transliteration of the two Gospels in Shilluk into

the Shilluk alphabet in Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, and extensive revisions of the Turkish version of the New Testament; the Canton (China) Colloquial Old Testament; and the Ilocano (Philippines) Old Testament.

According to what the Scriptures say—the Scriptures that, as one said, mastered a Newton, a Sir John Herschel, a Kepler, a Davy, a Fardy, a Boyle, a Harvey, a Simpson, a Beale, a Duke of Argyle, a David Brewster, a Dana, a Hitchock, a Miller, a Guyot, a Pasteur, a Kelvin, and a Dawson—Jesus died, and rose again, though buried.

All this, according to the Scriptures, the Word of God—no feeble child begging in the streets of Vanity Fair, but a lofty giant whose strides down the ages have toppled over old thrones, snapped the rusty chains of superstition, and have overthrown seemingly impregnable fortresses of paganism.

According to the Scriptures—not a chapter, not a verse, not a line of which is negligible, or dispensable, but profitable in its every part for some of the diverse uses of life.

According to the Scriptures—that marvelous Book all of whose analogies, types, pictures, and prophesies are so related to Christ that he alone explains them—he alone being its Alpha and Omega, he alone its animus, he alone its mind, he alone its spirit—he alone giving meaning to its genealogies, meaning to its histories, meaning to its chronologies—he alone being always the secret of its unity, the secret of its strength, the secret of its beauty.

According to the Scriptures on every page of which,

in expression or symbol of prophecy or psalm or proverb, is the name of Jesus.

"Christ died for our sins . . . he was buried . . . he rose again the third day."

All that Homer had to say has been told in twenty modern languages.

All that Shakespeare wrote has been translated into forty languages.

All that Tolstoy declared to the world found expression in sixty languages.

All that Thomas à Kempis said in *The Imitation of Christ* has comforted hearts and inspired lives in forty-five different tongues.

And Bunyan's immortal allegory, *Pilgrim's Progress*, since it crawled out from beneath the bars of Bunyan's prison cell, has spoken to millions of souls in one hundred and eighteen languages.

But the truth that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures and was buried and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, has in over seven times one hundred and eighteen languages gone abroad, like refreshing rains in times of dreadful drouth—bringing refreshing, bringing revivifying, bringing comfort, bringing hope, bringing eternal life through him to whom the words point.

And in this Book of books wherein we find a gradual unfolding of a divine plan, wherein we find a perfect unity from the "In" of the first verse of the first chapter of Genesis to the "Amen" of the last verse of the last chapter of Revelation, wherein we find the later portions validating claims made centuries before and pre-

senting the fulfillment of prophetic utterances, we find nothing sweeter, nothing more beautiful, and nothing more terrible and nothing more triumphant than that Christ died for our sins and was buried and rose again the third day.

"Voices are crying from the ruins of Tyre,
From Karnak, and the stones of Babylon,
Saying we raised our pillars of self-desire
And so perished from the large gaze of the sun.

"A grandeur came down from the Pyramids,
A glory came on Greece, a light on Rome;
But in them all the ancient traitor hid,
And so they perished like momentary foam.

"There was no substance in their soaring hopes,
The voice of Thebes is but a desert cry;
A spider bars the way with filmy ropes
Where once the fleets of Carthage thundered by.

"A bittern cries where once Queen Dido laughed;
A thistle nods where once the Forum roared;
A lizard lifts and listens on a shaft
Where once of old the Coliseum poured."

But the Bible lives on and marches on, telling all who will hear and giving assurance of eternal life to all who believe and confirming with the authority of God himself, the matchless and marvelous truths that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures and was buried and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

Like a tower of chiming bells of hope, the music of its words, mellow and ceaseless and glorious, rings across the world!

"Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures"

"He was buried."

"He rose again the third day according to the scriptures."

What the glorious sun is to our watching in the night for the coming day, that and ten thousand times more, are the truths of the words:

"*Christ.*"

"Christ *died.*"

"Christ died *for our sins.*"

"Christ died for our sins *according to the scriptures.*"

"He was *buried.*"

"He *rose* again."

"He rose again *the third day.*"

"He rose again the third day *according to the scriptures.*"

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